

NEW YORK Saturday Journal

A POPULAR PAPER FOR PLEASURE AND PROFIT.

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Vol. IV.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,
PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 8, 1873.

TERMS IN ADVANCE: (One copy, four months, \$1.00.
One copy, one year, \$2.00.
Two copies, one year, \$3.00.)

No. 191.

TEMPTED.

BY FRANK M. IMBRIE.

Tempted! oh, does that piteous word
Fall on some coldy scornful ear
Of those who, from their strong, high tower,
Untempted, know not fate so dear?
Or does it fall on some poor heart,
A bleeding wreck, beneath the crush
Of girlhood's fondest, proudest hopes,
Whose broken will all life-joys hush?

Chide not the tempted one!
Some tender, bursting bud, whose love
Lay couchant, till some master-power
Has waked with wildest, ruthless touch
Her being, in that passion-hour,
Oh, blighter! does her sad, sweet face
E'er haunt you with your burning crime?
Does fancy paint a kneeling form
That prays for her poor soul and thine?

Oh, tempter, cease! thou pray?
Yes, pray—for we poor humans err—
But oh, forgiveness comes by prayer;
And all the burdened, care-worn ones
Can shut from sight the world's cold stare,
And cast themselves on Jesus' breast
When life's cloud-billows round them roar,
And hear the kindly, soothing tones:
"Thou'rt pardoned; go and sin no more!"
God cleanse all from sin.

Perchance the tempter's wily trail
Its slimy track casts round a home
Where perfect womanhood's enshrined;
Whose heart ne'er felt love's deepest tone.
He comes with wooing blandishments,
But firm she bids temptation flee;
And with a strange, bliss-power she stands
Unspotted, pure, sin-conquering, free.
Thank God, the tempted's free.

RED ARROW,

THE WOLF DEMON;

OR,
The Queen of the Kanawha.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "THE MAN FROM TEXAS," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GIRL THAT FIRED THE SHOT.

WINTHROP looked with amazed eyes upon his preserver, for that the girl had saved his life by coming so timely to his rescue, there was hardly a doubt.

The young man saw a beautiful girl, clad in the Indian fashion, her garb gayly fringed and decorated with colored beads. But though clad in the garb of the Indian, more white blood than red leaped in the veins of the forest-child. Her skin was of a rich olive tinge; a peculiar skin—so thin, despite its darkness, that it showed the quick play of the surging blood in the veins beneath.

Dark-brown hair floated in tangled masses from the fillet of deer-skin, adorned with eagle-plumes, that encircled her head. Her eyes were dark-brown in their hue, and large and full as the eyes of the deer.

Grace was in every motion, yet one could easily see that the graceful limbs were strong and sinewy—muscles of steel beneath the silken skin.

Lightly the girl bounded down, from rock to rock, until she reached the bottom of the defile wherein stood the two by the carcass of the dead bear who had fallen by the rifle of this forest fay.

Nor was Virginia less astonished at the sudden appearance of the dark-hued maiden than the young stranger.

She gazed with amazement on the girl who was so unlike all of her sex in looks and dress. "A lucky shot!" exclaimed the Wood Nymph, kneeling by the side of dead Bruin, and examining the wound that had given him his death.

"I owe you my life!" cried Winthrop, impulsively; "for had I once got into the grim hug of the brute, I'm afraid he would have made sad work of me."

"No, not to me," replied the girl, "but to the great One above who first sent me to your aid, and then gave me the skill to send the ball home to the heart of the bear."

"I shall thank you, though, all the same," replied the young man. "You have saved my life, and, while I live, I shall never forget it."

"Don't speak of it any more, please," said the girl, a blush mantling to her cheeks at the earnest gaze of the young forester. "You threw yourself into danger to save this young lady; Heaven sent me to your aid, for it was not right that you should be sacrificed while acting so nobly."

Yes; and I must thank you, sir, for periling your life in my behalf," said Virginia, in her low, sweet voice, that thrilled like pleasant music through the heart of the young adventurer.

"You make me ashamed of my simple service," replied Winthrop. "I would have done the same for any one in peril. It is our duty in this life to help our fellow-creatures, and I would be unworthy of the name of man had I stood by and witnessed your peril without making an effort to save you."

The forest-maiden watched the girl's face while the young man was speaking, with a peculiar expression in her dark eyes. "I am Virginia, daughter of General Treveling, of Point Pleasant; if you are going thither, I am sure my father will thank you heartily for the service you have this day rendered his only child."

"I am going to Point Pleasant, and shall be pleased to meet your father, whom I have heard highly spoken of many times on my way here," said Winthrop. Then he turned to the girl in the Indian garb, who stood leaning upon her rifle, with her eyes intently fixed upon the two.

"Lady, may I not know the name of her whose well-directed shot saved me? There may come a time when I can repay the service."

"Do not ask my name," said the girl, in a mournful tone; "it is better, perhaps, that you should not know it."

Winthrop looked with astonishment at this strange speech.



Kate, leaning on her rifle, remained in a deep reverie, gazing absently upon their departing figures.

"I really do not see how that can be, lady," he said, after a moment's pause. "I am sure I shall never forget the service, nor your name, if once I hear it."

"I repeat that it is better that you should not know it," said the girl, slowly.

"Why so?" demanded the young man, while on the face of Virginia was written strong curiosity to know the meaning of the girl's words.

"You think that you owe me gratitude," said the dark-hued maiden. "It is a pleasant thought for me to know that some one thinks well of me. If I tell you my name, perhaps the gratitude that you now think you owe will vanish, and in its place will come loathing."

"You speak in riddles," said Winthrop, unable to guess her meaning, but plainly seeing that some mystery was concealed in her words. "I do not see how the knowledge of your name will change my sentiments in any way whatsoever. I beseech you, tell me what it is. I can never forget the name of one who saved my life."

"And you, Virginia Treveling," said the girl, turning abruptly to the General's daughter.

"Do you not know who I am?"

"No," replied Virginia, "but I should like very much to know, for I feel that, in part, I owe you my life, too."

"Blame yourself, then, if, after I have told you my name, you shrink from me, and gratitude dies in loathing. I am Kanawha Kate!"

Virginia started when the name fell upon her ears. The quick eye of Kate noticed the start. Winthrop did not manifest any emotion whatever. It was the first time that he had ever heard the name, and though he wondered somewhat at the strange appellation, still he saw nothing in it to alarm him in any way.

"You shrink from me," said Kate, with a bitter smile—she was referring to the almost unconscious start that Virginia had made when she heard the name. "You know who I am. You have heard evil tongues talk of me, and you are not so grateful now as you were a moment ago."

"Nay, you wrong me," said Virginia, gently. "In all my life I have never heard evil spoken of Kanawha Kate. I have heard you called wild and wayward—spoken of as one more like a boy than a girl—who liked to roam about the forest better than to sit at home. But when I heard the tongues of the settlers speak lightly of you, I have always remembered that you

were an orphan—without mother or father—with no one to tell you what you should do."

"You are right, I have grown up like a weed, uncared for by all—there was great bitterness in the tone of the girl's voice—"my only relative a renegade from his country and his race—a white Indian, far worse than the dusky savages. Why should I not be an outcast, despised by all, when my unhappy fate dooms me to such a life?"

"No, not despised by all," said Virginia, firmly. "I do not despise you; I love you—that is, if you will let me." And the girl placed her hand gently on the shoulder of the other.

"Oh, I thank you so much!" the words came in a half-sob from the lips of the forest child.

"Let me be your sister. Come and see me at my home at the station. Few will be bold enough to say aught against the sister of Virginia Treveling." Proudly the young girl drew up her form as she uttered the words.

"Yes, and for want of a better, take me for your brother," said Winthrop, impulsively, "and the man who dares to breathe a word against you will have to face the muzzle of my rifle."

"It is many a long day since such kind words have fallen upon my ears," said Kate, sadly. "Perhaps I should not be so wild if my parents had lived. But, Miss Virginia, I will come and see you."

"Do, and I promise you a hearty welcome!" exclaimed Virginia.

"Oh, I will come!" cried Kate, her eyes gleaming.

"Good-by, then," and the rescued girl turned to Winthrop. "If you are going to Point Pleasant I will be your guide, and I am sure that my father will be very glad to see you, particularly when he learns that you have saved the life of his only child!"

Virginia embraced Kate heartily, and kissed her as if she had been a sister; Winthrop shook her warmly by the hand, and then the two, leaving the forest-maid standing by the body of the dead brute, retraced their way to the little trail that led to Point Pleasant.

Kate, leaning on her rifle, remained in a deep reverie, gazing absently upon their departing figures.

Winthrop found his horse exactly where he had left him. Passing the bride over his arm, he walked by the side of Virginia toward the station.

"What a strange creature that girl is," he said, as they walked onward.

"Yes, I have often heard of her, though I have never happened to meet her before. The settlers tell a great many stories about her. They say that she can ride better than any man on the border. That she knows every foot of the country for miles around, even to the Indian villages on the other side of the Ohio. Then, too, they say she is a splendid shot with the rifle, and can use the hunting-knife like a woodman."

"We can vouch for her skill in marksmanship," said Winthrop, and a half-silver came over him when he thought of the huge bear, with its fierce eyes and shining teeth.

"Yes; poor girl, she is a niece of the renegade, Simon Girty, and that, I think, makes the settlers dislike her—as if she should answer for the misdeeds of her wicked uncle!" Virginia spoke with feeling; her face lighted up, and Winthrop thought that he had never looked upon a prettier maiden.

CHAPTER V.

VIRGINIA'S SUITOR.

In the best room of Treveling's house sat the old General and a young man, known as Clement Murdock. He was a relative of Treveling, and was much esteemed by the old General.

General Treveling was a man of fifty. Years had whitened the hair of the old soldier and bent the once stalwart form.

Murdock was some thirty years old—a dark, swarthy-faced man, with a piercing black eye and a haughty bearing.

The young man had just entered, and returning the General's cordial greeting, had taken a seat by his side.

"What's the news?" asked Treveling.

"Nothing particular, General," replied the other.

"Nothing fresh from the red-skins? It's about time for them to be on the war-path against us again."

"They have not forgotten the thrashing they got last year, I suppose," said the young man. "But, I want to speak with you on a subject which I have thought a great deal of lately."

The old General looked astonished at this beginning.

"Very well, what is it?" he asked.

"In regard to your daughter, Virginia, General," said Murdock, slowly. "I would like your permission to pay my addresses to her. I have long loved your daughter, and I should like to make her my wife."

"Well, Clement, you know that you have my best wishes. There isn't a man in the settlement that I would rather give my child to. But, win her consent: that comes first, of course. If she is willing, I shall not object."

The joy of Murdock plainly showed itself in his face.

"That is all I ask, General," he said, quickly. "I thought it but right that you should know my intentions first."

"Well, you have my good will, Clement," said the old soldier, "and I do not doubt but that you will find favor in the eyes of Virginia. She will be home soon. She has gone for blackberries down the river."

And as the father spoke the door opened and Virginia entered, followed by the young adventurer, Harvey Winthrop.

"Oh, father, I have had such an escape," said the maiden, quickly; then she gave an account of her adventure in the forest with the bear.

"Why, sir, I owe you the life of my child!" cried the General, earnestly, when the girl had finished her story. "How may I call your name?"

"Winthrop—Harvey Winthrop, an adventurer seeking his fortune on the border," replied the young man.

"You must drive your stakes with us, for a short time, at least, if we can not induce you to make Point Pleasant your permanent home," said the old soldier, heartily. "I am General Treveling, sir; this, my daughter, Virginia, and this gentleman a relative of ours, Clement Murdock."

Although Murdock shook hands in a friendly way with the stranger who had rescued his fair cousin from the bear, yet, in his heart, he wished him at the bottom of the Ohio. Was Clement afraid that the handsome stranger would interfere with his plans regarding the gentle Virginia?

Frankly—in the same spirit that it was given—Winthrop accepted the invitation of the old soldier. Perhaps, too, the thought that he should enjoy the society of the fair girl, whose life he had saved, had something to do with his ready acceptance of the hospitality of the old General!

Leaving her father and Winthrop engaged in busy conversation, Virginia withdrew into the inner room. Murdock, seizing the opportunity, followed. He had resolved to declare his passion at once. He had been an open and avowed lover of Virginia's for some time. In fact, all the settlers thought it would be a match. And Murdock, though he did not openly say that he was the accepted suitor of the General's daughter, yet by many a sly hint he contrived to impress all with that belief. So, one by one, his rivals for the girl's favor had withdrawn from the contest, and left the field clear to the scheming lover.

Yet now, even at the eleventh hour, when he had thought the hand of the girl was his beyond a doubt, this young stranger had stepped into the field, and that under such circumstances that the girl's gratitude if not her love must be surely his.

Murdock was sorely annoyed at the accident which had given the young man such a claim to the girl's esteem. He determined, however, to ask for the hand of the girl at once.

Virginia turned in some little astonishment when she discovered that she was followed by Clement.

He carefully closed the door behind him and approached the young girl.

"Virginia," he said, in his softest and smoothest tones, "I have long wished for an opportunity to tell you how much I love you. I have spoken to your father, and he approves my suit. Virginia, can you give me the priceless treasure of your love? Will you be my wife?"

The girl flushed to the temples at the words of Murdock. She had suspected that he sought her, but had carefully avoided leading him to think that she favored his suit. For, to tell the truth, the young girl did not love but rather feared him. There was a bad look in the fierce black eyes, and ugly lines about the sensual mouth, and these things she had noticed. In her heart Virginia thought that Murdock was far from being a good man.

"I am sorry, Mr. Murdock, that you have spoken in this way to me," said the girl, slowly, and with evident embarrassment. "It grieves me that I must pain you with a refusal. I can not accept the love that you offer."

Murdock started in anger, and the frown that knit his brows showed plainly his deep displeasure.

"Are you in earnest?" he asked, in amazement.

"Surely I am," replied the girl. She did not like the tone in which the question was put.

"Had you not better take time to think over the matter?" he said. "You may change your mind."

"That is not likely," she answered, coldly. "I can decide now as well as any time in the future. I feel that I can not love you."

"Do you love any one else?" he asked, quickly.

A faint flush came to the cheeks of the girl, which did not escape the jealous eyes of the rejected lover.

"You have no right to ask that question," she cried.

"Will you answer it?"

"No."

"No?" repeated Virginia, all the fire of her nature roused by the insolent manner of the man who stood lowering before her.

"You do not dare to answer it."

"It is no business of yours what my motive is," replied Virginia, proudly.

"You fancy yourself in love with some one."

You can not deceive me. Let your lover look to himself. If you can not be my wife, I swear that you shall not be the wife of any other man. You are a beautiful girl, Virginia, but your beauty will be fatal to the mortal that dares to cross my path!"

Murdoch spoke in heat, and the angry glare of a demon shot from his fierce black eyes.

"If I have a lover, he will be able to defend himself from the coward who only dares to threaten a woman." And with these words Virginia swept proudly from the room.

"By all the powers of darkness, I swear that I will find means to bend your haughty spirit, and on your knees you will be glad to ask my pardon for those proud words!" cried the baffled lover, his voice hoarse with rage.

Then he left the house by the back door and gained the street. He did not care to meet the eyes of the old General, for he readily guessed that his discomfiture would easily be perceived.

"Who can the lover be?" he mused, as he walked slowly down the street. "Can it be this young stranger who saved her from the bear in the ravine? It may be. I am sure that there isn't a lad on the border that is favored by her, for I have watched her closely. Is the prize then that I have toiled so to gain to be snatched from my hand by this adventurer? She must marry me, or—she must die! She is the only obstacle between me and the fortune of the old General. That fortune I am determined to have, and the silly caprice of a weak girl shall not keep me from it."

Stern and frowning was the brow of Clement Murdoch as he strode along. Dark and gloomy thoughts were passing rapidly through his mind.

"The die is cast—I have decided," he muttered, as he walked onward. "First to find out who this lover is, that has crossed my path—for that the girl has a lover or is in love with some one, I am certain. I marked the slight flush that crimsoned her cheek when I charged her with loving another; that blush revealed to me the truth. I have a rival, and a dangerous one, for she loves him. I must discover who it is. If the young adventurer is the man, let him look to himself, for the fortune that he comes to seek by the banks of the Ohio, may resolve itself into a grave in the forest with the gaunt gray wolves as mourners. True, the acquaintanceship is but a few hours old, but love comes at first sight, sometimes. The fortune of my relative shall be mine, either with Virginia or without her. I must find some willing tools to aid me, for I feel a presentiment that I shall have need of strong arms and reckless hearts, ere long."

Then the eyes of Murdoch caught sight of a little group of settlers at the lower end of the station near the bank of the Kanawha.

"Hallo! what's the meaning of that, I wonder?" he exclaimed; "there's evidently some trouble afoot. Another Indian attack perhaps. I must see what it is." And he advanced to the group.

CHAPTER VI.

ANOTHER VICTIM.

As Murdoch approached the group, he saw that Colonel Boone and a strange hunter were in the center of the party.

Another strange face also met the eye of the newcomer. It was that of a man attired in the homespun dress of the emigrant. His hair was jet-black, and his skin tanned almost as dark as the hue of a red-skin. He stood on the outer edge of the group, leaning on a long rifle. The keen, dark eyes of this stranger had a restless look, and wandered continually about him.

Murdoch felt sure, the moment he beheld the face of the stranger, that he had seen him before somewhere, but, for the life of him, he could not guess when or where. Slowly he drew nigh, keeping a wary eye upon the hunter-emigrant.

Boone had been telling the settlers the news imparted to him by the solitary hunter who he had encountered in the forest in such a peculiar manner, and who was called Abe Lark.

"The Shawnees again on the war-path?" cried a stalwart settler, known as Jacob Jackson, and renowned as an Indian-fighter.

As Boone had predicted, there were white faces among the settlers when they heard the terrible news.

"True as shootin'!" cried Boone, "an' comin' ag'in' us in bigger numbers than has ever been seen on the border since we licked 'em right hyer in the Danmore war."

A heavy frown came over the face of the stranger, who stood a little apart from the others, as Boone mentioned the battle of Point Pleasant. It was evident that the mention of that bloody fight brought back some unpleasant recollections to the mind of the stranger.

Murdoch was watching the man closely, but he was careful not to betray to the stranger that he was being watched.

"Who leads the red-skins?" asked Jackson.

"Ke-ne-ha-ha," replied Boone.

"The man that walks?" said Jackson.

And at the name the faces of the whites grew serious. They knew full well that a better chieftain than the Shawnee never donned the war-paint, and that the whites had no abler or more deadly foe than Ke-ne-ha-ha.

"That'll be lightnin' all round then, for sure," said Jackson, in a tone of conviction. "We've got to fight dogged well to whip the Shawnees this time. Who fetched the news, kurnel?"

"This stranger, hyer," replied Boone, pointing to Abe Lark, who stood by his side.

"Glad to see you, stranger," said Jackson, tendering his huge paw and receiving a grip that made him wince with pain, muscular and hard as his horny paw was.

"Same to you, ole boss," returned Lark, with a grin on his disfigured face at the expression of astonishment that came over the features of burly Jake Jackson, when he received the powerful squeeze of Lark's hand.

Jerusalem! muttered Jake, looking at his hand in amazement, "that's a reg'lar bar'n'g an' no mistake."

"Wal, I reckon the man that gits a grip from me knows it," replied Lark.

"Well, 'bout this news. Are you sartin, stranger, that the red devils are a-comin' ag'in' us?"

"If you don't hear the Shawnee war-whoop inside of ten days you kin jist chaw one of my fingers off, an' I don't keer which you take," replied Lark, with another grin.

"Then it will be fight, an' no mistake."

"You kin bet your moccasins on that, an' you'll lose 'em every time. The Shawnees have sworn to wipe out every white settlement along the Ohio. That'll be nigh onto ten thousand Injuns in the field. They are hot arter blood. You'll have to fight for your top-knots or lose 'em."

A bitter look was on the face of the dark-skinned stranger as he listened to the words of Lark.

"Curses on this meddling hunter!" he muttered, between his teeth; "how could he have learned of Ke-ne-ha-ha's plan to surprise this station. Now, thanks to him, they'll be on their guard, and the Shawnees will have to fight for what scalps they take."

Not an expression on the face of this stran-

ger was unnoticed by Murdoch, who still watched him keenly, but with a puzzled look.

"Can it be possible that it is he?" Murdoch mused. "Would he dare to venture here in the midst of his foes? To venture into the presence of the men, who, if they penetrated his disguise, would hang him up to the first tree without troubling either judge or jury? Yet, I am sure it is he, though his face is darkened by some means and his hair is black. He comes as a spy, probably. All!" and a brilliant thought occurred to the mind of Murdoch.

"Suppose I get him to aid my plans. He is in my power, if he be the man I think he is, for a single word uttered by my lips, and the settlers would almost tear him to pieces. I'll watch him closely." And with this resolution in his mind, Murdoch did not remove his eyes from the stranger. The dark-skinned hunter was so occupied in watching the group of settlers and listening to their conversation that he did not notice that he in turn was watched.

"Well, neighbors," said Jake Jackson, after thinking for a moment, "if the Injuns are a-comin' we've got for to fight 'em, an' I am ready for one."

"And I for another!" cried a loud, clear voice.

All turned to look at the speaker, who had approached unnoticed. He was a tall, muscular fellow, dressed in the forest garb of deer-skin.

"Sim Kenton, by the Eternal!" said Boone, taking him warmly by the hand.

It was indeed the famous scout, whose reputation as an Indian-fighter was second to none on the border.

"Glad to see you, Sim!" continued Boone, and the group of settlers eagerly echoed the welcome. "What's the news?"

"There's a thunder-storm a-comin'," replied the scout. "I s'pect from what I heard, as I come up, that you know the Shawnees are on the war-path."

"Yes, yes!" cried a dozen voices.

"I've just come down from the Muskingum, whar I've been on a hunt, and not five miles from this hyer station. I come across a big Injun a-lyin' dead in the woods with a clean dig right through the skull. A powerful fellow he war, too; looked as if he mought have given Old Nick himself a sharp tussle."

All wondered at the news brought by the scout. That a red-skin should be killed so near the station, and yet no one in the station know of it, was strange.

"What tribe was he? could you tell, Sim?" asked Boone.

"Shawnee," replied Kenton. "A big brave he was in the tribe, too. I knowed him well. He was called Watega."

The dark stranger, who had pressed forward eagerly to listen with the rest, could hardly prevent an oath escaping from his lips. This movement on his part did not escape the searching eyes of Murdoch.

"I know the chief," said Boone. "He was one of the principal warriors of the tribe. A clean dig through the skull you say?"

"Yes; the man that made it must be a hurricane, for he split the Injun's head clean open."

"Who could have done it?" said Jackson, in wonder.

"That's what I'd like to know," said Kenton, with a puzzled air. "Thar ain't any man along the border, that I know of, that is powerful enough for to do it. Thar war'n't any marks of a struggle neither. The Injun had been taken by surprise, an' settled with one blow. Why, it looks as if the devil himself had had a hand in it."

"Nothing but one clean dig, eh?" said Boone, reflectively.

"Nothing else," replied Kenton, "cept some knife-cuts on the breast, as if the slayer cut his totem thar, arter finishing the brute."

Boone gave a slight start—a start that was imitated by the dark-skinned stranger who was listening to the conversation so eagerly.

"And them marks—three knife-cuts, making a red arrow?" asked Boone.

"Right to an iota!" cried Kenton, astonished at the knowledge of the other.

"The Wolf Demon, by hooky!" exclaimed Boone, in a tone of wonder. "And at the name of the dreaded foe of the Shawnee nation, the dark stranger shuddered."

"What in creation do you mean by the Wolf Demon?" asked Kenton, who had never heard the story of the mysterious scourge of the Shawnees, which was well known to Boone.

Then the old hunter told the wondering crowd the story of the Wolf Demon. Told of the incomprehensible being in the shape of a gray huge wolf, but with the face of a man, who seemed to be an avenging angel destined to hunt down to his death any solitary Shawnee brave who strayed from his brethren in the forest.

Wonder-stricken, the stout borderers listened to the tale; deeply superstitious, they accepted the legend of the Indians without question; one and all were convinced that the Wolf Demon was, as the Shawnees asserted, proof against either steel or ball, and was no human, but a demon of another world.

"What was the body?" asked Jackson.

"Just beyond a tree where some hunter had cut his name—Abe Lark," answered Kenton.

"Wal, we were nigh it this mornin'!" cried Abe, in astonishment.

The dark-skinned stranger, having apparently heard all he wanted, strolled leisurely away. Murdoch, convinced now that he was not mistaken as to the identity of the stranger, followed him slowly.

Let this Wolf Demon come within range of my rifle, I'll quickly prove whether he is man or devil," said the unknown, as he walked onward. "Watega dead? That interferes with my plans, but I can do without him, since it must be so." And with these strange words on his tongue, he was suddenly astonished by being hailed by Murdoch.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 190.)

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IN MEMORIAM.

BY M. R. C.

She is dead; she is gone; and the arms that enclasped me
Now are folded so mock on her still, snowy breast.
She is gone; and the light of my life is departed,
I wander disquiet, she dreamlessly rests.

The day-star of gladness was quenched while 'twas rising
On the sky of my life, then unclouded and bright;
But the sharp, sudden blow turned my daylight to darkness,
And I buried my darling away from my sight.

What to me is earth, with her pleasures so transient?
What care I for them, when my Mary is not?
A vain attempt not to yoke cheating phantoms,
I mourn without solace; I grieve at my lot.

When the sunshine glows round me in radiant splendor,
Or the moonlight, so tenderly, falls on my brow,
When quiet, or speeding away like the whirlwind
Past the spot, oh, so sacred! where she's lying so low—

In fancy I see her: feel her presence yet with me;
And my heart yearns toward her, to kiss her once more!
But she's dead! she is gone! and the arms that enclasped
Will unfold not again this side Heaven's fair shore.

Ytol:

Lost, Wedded, Widowed and Rewon.

A STORY OF TRIALS AND BALMS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "STEALING A HEART," "BLACK HAND," "IRON AND GOLD," "RED SCORPION," "PEARL OF PEARLS," "HERCULES, THE SCUMPHACK," "CAT AND TIGER," "FLAMING TAILSMAN," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

SNATCHED FROM DEATH.

"* * * the madden'd wave
Leaps foaming up, to find its prey
Snatched from its mouth and borne away."

"Thou* to whom the world unknown,
With all its shadowy shapes is shown;
Who seest appail'd the mortal scene,
While fancy lifts the veil between."

—COLLINS.

ALL through the terrible night Ytol clung to the spar, tossed and buffeted about, drifting helpless and hopeless on the waves.

Her endurance seemed incredible; but the great strength of faith in Heaven was centered in her young heart, nerving her beyond mere mortal energy.

The hours dragged on. The storm, as if its fury spent, had passed over; the black clouds broke and crawled away on the hissing airs, like misty monsters gliding and shrinking from their deeds of destruction.

The stars peeped forth; the winds lulled to a plaintive murmur, but the huge billows lashed together with a sullen sound.

Occasionally, as she floated on the amberous crests, she could see the rays from the light-house afar off—appearing and disappearing as she rose and fell; and this glimmered fainter and fainter, till she realized that she was being carried out to sea by the scarce-perceptible currents.

She felt that she was drowning. Such a tax upon her frail muscles could not last much longer. Each moment, in her unutterable anguish—an anguish half-triumphing even in her soul of gold—she was about to relax her hold—then down, down to the cold terrors of a watery grave!

Morning dawned in splendor. No trace in the broad blue sky of the recent storm; all serene and mild, as if its sunlit vault had never known the mar of blast or darkness. The ocean sank to its gentle undulations, like the anger of a giant falls to rest beneath the charm of fairy kisses—flowing calm as ere the claws of the tempest tore its bosom.

"It was a scene of peace—and, like a spell
Did that serene and golden sunlight fall."

There was no land; all green around—the blue-green of the sea.

And there, alone, grown haggard and ghostly with her agonies, was Ytol.

Her eyes had lost their softness; their glance was hard and staring, and her bloodless lips were tightly compressed over clinched teeth. In her white face was written the clammy hue of despair, and her delicate nostrils were dilated by the fast yet weary breath.

But those straining eyes were riveted on a dark line that moved on the glistening waters. As it approached nearer she saw it was a steamer.

From masts and guys fluttered gaudy flags and streamers, and presently her ears caught the melody of music wafted on the cool breeze.

For one second, lone kindled in her breast, and she raised her weak voice in a wail of un earthly accent. Then that momentary hope sunk, and fresh torture wrung the aching heart.

The vessel was passing near her—so near that she could hear the laughter of merry people on the decks.

Again she screamed forth the plaintive appeal, startled by the unnaturalness of her own tone; but, what use? Surely her weak cry could not be heard under such circumstances.

But—joy! The steamer went slower, and she could discern the figure of an officer standing on the rail by the shrouds, with a spy-glass.

She was discovered. In a frenzy she raised one arm aloft.

Then a boat was lowered, and she saw the bright blades of the oars flashing as they dipped in long, sweeping strokes.

Nigher it came. It was by her, almost striking her; then shot past like an arrow.

Ytol swooned. The relaxation was too severe. She had a dizzy, ringing sensation in her head; a myriad objects confused before her vision; she heard a electric shout—darkness.

A pair of muscular arms grasped round her perishing form—and she was saved!

"Where am I?" The first utterance of lips that had been long closed in a deathlike trance.

Ytol had been tenderly cared for by the captain and passengers of the steamer. She had revived about noon, as she lay on one of the soft bunks, in a state-room; but her mind was delirious, and she spoke randomly of strange, incomprehensible things. At times she would cry out:

"Mercy!" as if beset with all the terrors of a fiendish vision. And again:

"Wharlie! oh, Wharlie! come back to me! Where are you? I can't see—it is black—all black. And they separated us—no, no, Jerome, I can't—I can't!"

The ship's physician was on duty at her bedside, watching the progress of the fever that settled in her frame, and for hours he sat there, timing her pulse, guarding her condition in person.

There were stealthy, muffled footsteps, and low inquiries:

"How does the poor girl seem now, doctor?" He shook his head and did not speak.

At four o'clock, however, he pronounced her out of immediate danger. Still, she must be taken care of exceedingly well ere he could say she was safe.

The flushed face on the pillow turned slowly toward the watcher, and the blue eyes, sparkling with a heavenly beauty, glanced bewilderedly at him.

*Pear.

"Where am I? What has happened?"

"Sh!—quiet, my dear," said the medical worthy, rising and going to her side. "Don't talk much. You've been ill, quite ill, my dear."

But she asked again:

"You took me from the ocean, didn't you? You saved me? I was drowning—oh! it was so cold, cold there; and now I'm burning up. What ails me? Isn't this a ship I'm in?" her glance wandered round the apartment.

"Yes, my dear, it's a ship."

"And where is it going?" persisted Ytol.

"To Liverpool, my dear," he answered, hoping to quiet her.

"To Liverpool!—to Liverpool!" she repeated, in a low tone, and closing her eyelids as she dwelt upon the word.

"Just try and go to sleep," he advised.

"You need a long term of rest and utter forgetfulness. You are in good hands, so feel perfectly contented for a little while."

"We are going to England," uttered the girl, with her eyes still closed, as if trying to think with that painful brain.

"Yes, to England, my dear," and mentally, "Hang her obstinacy! She'll talk herself into delirium."

"Are you the captain?"

"No, my dear; I'm the doctor. Now, do go to sleep."

"Won't you send the captain to me, please?"

"Impossible in your present state. I forbide."

But Ytol would not yield. She insisted on seeing the captain; and the doctor, perceiving that she was working herself into a dangerous excitement, hastened to comply with her request.

"A most obstinate patient!" he exclaimed, as his slim body strode nervously from the cabin.

Captain D'Arcy was a fine-looking gentleman of somewhat mature years; a thorough seaman and of generous nature.

He went to the side of the rescued castaway, wearing a genial smile, and speaking pleasantly.

"Oh, she's getting along first-rate, doctor," taking Ytol's fevered hands in his own.

"Yes, if she'll only keep quiet," supplemented the worthy M. D., intending the hint for his patient's ears.

"Captain, I want to speak to you alone," whispered Ytol.

The physician moved uneasily.

"She'll talk herself sick again," he declared.

"Oh, well, humor her a little," D'Arcy suggested, smiling; "I won't let her say nor ask too much."

When they were alone:

"We are going to England, captain?"

"Yes, to Liverpool."

"What will you do with me?"

"With you?" a little astonished. "Why, you've got to make the trip. It's a clean voyage there and back."

"And you can't put me off—"

"No. What made you ask such a question?"

"Because I haven't any money to pay you."

"Nonsense!"

"Even when we return," she added.

Her manner puzzled him.

"Captain," Ytol spoke in a suppressed tone, "may I confide to you a secret?"

"Certainly."

She seemed hesitating; but, after a moment:

"I don't think I'll return to America."

"Why?" he asked, detecting a tinge of sadness there; and he pressed her hands gently.

"Because I have no home."

"No home? Haven't you any friends?"

"Oh, yes, there are a few who have been kind to me. But they will not miss me. I was nothing to them. A few friends, captain; but now, none—none—none." She answered bitterly, and a sob half burst from her lips.

"What is your name?" he questioned, after a pause, during which he glanced searchingly down at the flushed and beautiful face.

"Ytol Lyn."

"Ytol Lyn? You have a sweet name. Tell me of yourself, Ytol."

She drew forward a chair, and sat at her side. Ytol freely confided to him her brief history.

She unburdened all. The tale was more than what she had related to Isabel Drew; it was a recounting of the past, with all her sufferings, up to the time and detail of her abduction.

When she had concluded the recital, she added:

"Thus, you see, I am situated in a hopeless world. I may as well live or die in England as America. Perhaps I may get something to do, and live. Though I haven't much to live for."

"What can you do?" he inquired, smoothing his gray beard, with eyes bent thoughtfully on the castaway.

"Indeed, I hardly know. I might get a position in some family, where the children are small, and teach. I have had very little opportunity for education myself; but I could teach young children, I am sure. And, besides, while teaching, I could pursue my own studies to advantage."

"Un!—yes—yes," with a sidelong glance.

"And if I fall in that, then I am not afraid of grosser work; I know what it is."

"Well, well, we'll see about it—we'll see. Don't bother about it now. Wait till you are better, my girl. Something may turn up. Then—"

But, go to sleep, now."

He withdrew shortly, encouraging Ytol to hope for the future.

And as he returned on deck, he was saying, in his mind:

"Bless the child! I must try and aid her. Nothing can be done just at present; but, when we reach Liverpool, I'll—well, we'll see."

In the evening Ytol was slumbering and dreaming. Her visions of sleep were not smooth, for she tossed restlessly on her pillow.

The fearful scene of the previous night came back; she thought herself drifting on the tempestuous seas, clinging to the spar. Then the face of Wharlie Dufour—his call to her—his vanishing; and out of the furied chaos rushed hideous shapes, screaming and grinning.

Suddenly, she started wide awake, roused by the frightful nightmare.

Simultaneously she beheld a dread apparition, a visage of ugliness peering at her through the half-open door.

Her tongue was palsied; the blood curdled in her veins.

The physician, still guarding the condition of his patient, was dozing in his chair; the hour was late, and all was hushed in that peculiar, whispering calm, which pervades the cabin of a ship at sea during the time of repose.

ders for another search after the mysterious apparition.

He was worried. Ytol had told him of the Dwarf, and his diabolical intentions, and that such a character should be concealed aboard the ship filled him with apprehensions for the safety of all on board. But what puzzled him most was, how this human demon could have gotten upon the steamer. It was a mystery.

"Confounded strange!" he muttered. "He's dangerous. A wild man. We must find him. He must be insane. Ugh!—I shan't forget the sight as long as I live."

But again were the efforts of officers and crew futile.

The Dwarf was not to be found, though every crack, corner, hole and shelf was looked into, above and below—even aloft.

D'Arey returned to Ytol, frowning. It was near morning.

"We can't find the rascal—though the hunt isn't over yet."

Ytol gazed strangely into his face.

"You won't find him," she said, hollowly. "He perished, that night, in the storm. I heard his death-cry on the wind. I am haunted!"

"Bah! I don't believe in the unnatural, and, thank Providence, my crew don't take any stock in spirits, alcoholic or perditionized. We'll haul this wild fellow out of his lair, before we make port."

Then, after a few more practical assurances—

"I don't consider you safe, alone. But it won't do to let the passengers know you are affected by this presence. I recommend that you have the cabin-maid here with you, for company."

"Oh! I should be so glad," said Ytol, gratefully.

"You'll find her a neat, tidy girl—"

"Yes. Let her stay with me, please. I shall feel safer."

"Not necessary for you to explain to her, you know. Calm yourself; I'll send her directly."

The cabin-maid came, and Ytol experienced a great relief in her companionship. D'Arey instructed the girl to keep near Ytol, as much as possible, on all occasions; and the two became quite sociable together during the remainder of the voyage.

But they little dreamed that, while searching for the Dwarf was progressing, a pair of glittering, scintillating, basilisk orbs were staring fiercely at them from the cavity underneath the bunk.

A dark form was stretched there, still and watching—the hideous form of Catdjo, the dreaded Dwarf.

No wonder they failed to discover the hiding-place of the unwelcome presence. The lair of the serpent was in the very nest of its intended prey!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HOME OVER THE WATERS.

"Another season of the year
Is now upon the earth and me,"

—LANDON.

"Yet no! Despair shall sink not
While life and love remain!"

—NORTON.

CATDJO was seen no more on board the Petrel.

He was aware of their close searching after him, and had heard discussed the fate in store for him when caught, which amounts to the universal exclamation:

"Toss him over!"

Only by a ghostly stealth was he able to obtain food and drink; and yet he lived the voyage through, thus ever keeping the unsuspecting girl in sight—nursing while he claimed his hate, and patiently waiting the opportunities of the future.

At Ballycotton, the steamer was boarded by Pat Sanders, the Channel pilot—the inimitable Pat, mention of whom here may bring a smile to the lips of many readers who have, perhaps, seen him, and can recall the numerous laughable anecdotes connected with him and his "darlin' in the Cove o' Cork."

"Now, cap'n," he cried—as he has been heard to cry, "square away an' let her go 'id a rip for Tuskar!"

Past the dangerous rocks of Tuskar; narrowly escaping a collision with one of the mail ships at Hollyhead; another pilot at Point Lynns—then the hurry to save flood-tide. And Pat, on the forecastle, with his eyes staring through the fog:

"Whist, there! d'ye hear a horn?"

"I don't hear any, Mr. Sanders," said the second mate, from the port bow.

"Mr. Sanders!—an' I'm pilot. Hist! d'ye hear it, on the starboard bow—easy there—we're runnin' into it, an' I can't see a stitch. What the devil is it, anyhow—d'ye hear?—it's past." Some one laughed lowly as a figure moved aft, carrying an uncorked bottle, in the neck of which the wind blew like the sound of a smothered horn.

In due time the Petrel lay snug at Brunswick dock, and the shore crew was busy on her decks.

It was the second day following the steamer's arrival. Ytol had not yet left the ship. Captain D'Arey was sitting with her in the state-room.

"I was on shore this morning," he said, "and attended to a little business for you."

He spoke cheerfully, and Ytol saw a pleased look in his face.

"Business for me, Captain D'Arey?"

"Yes."

"Why, what can it be?" she asked, surprisedly.

"And I think I've got some encouraging news."

"News?"

"To begin with, you'll stop at the Queen's Hotel to-night. To-morrow we'll see about these little affairs."

He drew a newspaper from his pocket, saying:

"Just read those two over—where I've marked."

Ytol read. Her eyes glistered. Here were chances for the very position which she had told Captain D'Arey, she hoped to obtain: advertisements for some one to fill the position of governess, where the children were quite young. One was in Eastham; the other on the Road.

"Oh, captain!" she exclaimed, hopefully, "I wonder if I can get one of these?"

"I have visited both—"

"You?"

"And I think you'll find it more enjoyable at the last-named place. It's an American family; the eldest of the young children is about eleven. I had some conversation with the lady—a widow, by the way."

"And it is possible that I may get the place?" Ytol said, questioning, and breathing fast.

"Oh, yes; I partially spoke it for you."

"How kind you are! Oh! Captain D'Arey, you've done a great deal for me."

"I haven't done any thing yet, my dear girl. But, do you feel yourself equal to the task before you?"

"I must," she replied, with firmness; "I have to earn a living for myself; and, with God to guide me, I must succeed."

"Very well, we'll drive out there to-morrow. In an hour from now we'll go to the hotel."

About four o'clock Ytol and the captain repaired to the hotel, where he had engaged a room for her. Still later, they went out to make a few purchases of which she stood sorely in need—Ytol not refusing the aid he so generously insisted on giving.

When he had gone, and she sat alone in her room, she yielded, for a brief space, to an overpowering emotion, and wept lowly.

She fully realized how much Captain D'Arey was doing for her; that it was his money upon which she then lived, that he had not yet done all. It was gratitude toward him, and the great tide of thankfulness to Heaven that brought the tears to her eyes. And she felt, too, how utterly alone she was in that foreign land, with no one to shelter or protect, no one to sympathize with her except Captain D'Arey.

How sad it would be, she thought, when the Petrel went away, bearing from her this sole being, among all around her, who would care to lighten the heavy hours of her life.

But, bright-eyed Hope soon cheered her from her melancholy mood; she roused her energies to face the stern ordeal before her.

When she slept that night her dreams were sweet. In repose, her trials were lulled away, and calm, and rest, and the others weary whom Ytol was to yield the scepter of governess.

In the morning D'Arey called for her with a carriage. As ever, he greeted her with smiles and pleasant words.

It was a delightful drive out of the city, along the smooth road, past the luxurious hedges; and all the while he talked about the new country to which she had come, and of happiness for her future.

Wilke Manor—their destination—was not much more than an hour's ride from Liverpool, and the estate of an American lady. She was a widow, with three children—one very near womanhood, and the others three or four years old. Ytol was to be the acceptor of governess.

A beautiful place; and Ytol thought how much like Rose Grove it seemed, in its surroundings near the tall-loomed house—only, there was a different atmosphere, a pervading something which rather awed her as they entered the broad gate and passed up the serpentine drive to the massive steps.

But she forced back her timid feeling, and a resolute look settled in her face.

They had not long to wait the pleasure of Mrs. Layworth.

A tall, regal woman of about forty years; a brunette, with eyes that flashed with a worldly look.

"Ah! Captain D'Arey."

"Madam"—rising.

"I am pleased to see you. And this is—"

"Miss Lyn."

Ytol arose to take the hand of the beautiful woman, which was extended cordially.

"What is your first name?"

"Ytol."

A sudden change came over the lady, her eyes widened as if in some mysterious surprise, and her clasp on Ytol's hand tightened.

"Ytol?—Ytol, did you say?"

"Yes, madame: Ytol Lyn."

But, whatever it was that caused Mrs. Layworth to start and stare upon hearing the name, she was herself again instantly.

"You were speaking to me about Miss Lyn, captain?" seating herself then.

"Yes; she comes to take the position in question—comes with my special recommendation. I think you will find her capacities admirable."

"Captain D'Arey's recommendation is all-sufficient," she said, with a gracious "society" bow. "When will she be ready to enter upon her duties?"

"Well—" hesitating and glancing at Ytol.

"At once, madam," answered the young girl.

"So much the better"—to Ytol. "If I had half-arranged it with the captain—and if you are prepared, we'll begin by showing you your room. I will introduce my children to their new preceptor this afternoon."

A servant was summoned, who showed Ytol to the room intended for her use. For Captain D'Arey had really done far more on his previous visit to Wilke Manor than he had told Ytol of; in fact, he had made a positive arrangement for Ytol, recommending her highly.

When the young girl had withdrawn:

"The Petrel goes out in three days, Mrs. Layworth. I shall pay my young friend, Ytol, a visit ere then. I am very much interested in her—very much. I do hope you'll be pleased with each other."

"I add, 'amen,'" she laughed. "Let us trust that you will find leisure to call more than once before your departure."

He bowed.

"I like Miss Lyn's looks— Is she not timid?"

"Not so timid as modest. She is a splendid girl in all respects."

After half an hour of lively conversation on topics aside from the business of Ytol's coming, he arose.

"I fear I have already overstayed myself," he said. "It is time I was returning to—"

"Returning? Don't think of it! You'll dine with us—with me, at least, for Ione, my only company at table, is in the city."

The captain yielded to an invitation for dinner. Then he could not decline her offer of entertainment for the afternoon, with a visit to the park, the lake, the lodge, and romantic wanderings along the shady paths. It was quite dusk, when he escaped the enjoyment of Mrs. Layworth's society.

Ytol and the children had been made acquainted, and they were off strolling somewhere when he left. But he was coming again, to see Ytol and to bid her good-by.

Ione Layworth, Mrs. Layworth's eldest child—a counterpart of her mother, except that she was more lovely in the flush and brilliancy of youth—was standing at one of the long hall windows, in the second story, when D'Arey waited his adieux.

She had been absent on a shopping tour all day, and returned a few moments before the captain's departure.

"Mother," she said, in a thoughtful way, as Mrs. Layworth ascended the stairs, "You have secured the governess for Cecil and Walter."

"Yes," answered the mother, a little abstractedly, going to her daughter's side, and also gazing out at the window.

Ytol and the children were moving along one of the paths. Their eyes were fixed on her.

"I want to tell you something," continued Ione.

"Or, perhaps you have noticed it?"

"What?"

"The remarkable likeness—"

"Ah! "

"I passed her in the carriage, as we came up the drive—"

"We?"

"Yes. Lord Somers is in the parlor."

"Is he? But what were you going to say about this girl, Ione?"

"I was immediately struck with her resemblance to the valued picture in your room."

"Ha!" exclaimed Mrs. Layworth, quickly, and looking hard into Ione's face. "It attracted you, did it?"

"Yes."

"Ione—" she spoke almost in a whisper, "her name is Ytol!"

"Ytol! Impossible!"

"So she tells me; so Captain D'Arey, her friend, tells me."

"How strange!"

"It is a mystery. We must learn more of her. I was dumbfounded when I first saw and heard; but I concealed it. We must get at this girl's history. Who knows but what—" pausing significantly.

"Ay," added Ione, in a strange tone, "who knows?"

Ytol, unconscious of their gaze, or that she was the subject of a mysterious, low-voiced conversation, was walking slowly on amid the shrubbery.

She was talking pleasantly with the children, and had already won reasonable portion of their love—the first essential for those who would assume the proper training of the young.

Suddenly Mrs. Layworth pointed out through the window, and cried:

"Look, Ione—quick! What does that mean? See!—she reels—she faints—she falls!"

Ytol was staggering backward, dizzily; she fell heavily to the smooth walk.

And while the mother and daughter gazed in astonishment, the voices of the children, screaming loudly, floated to their ears.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 187.)

My Unlucky Ride.

BY EBBE E. REXFORD.

My name is Samantha Patton. I'm what some people call an "old maid." I can't see what there is in being an old maid that people should make so much sport over. I'm sure we wouldn't belong to that respectable but much depreciated class if we could help ourselves. When women get their rights—then—oh, then!

Oh, blessed day of millennium! hasten on! We long for you! We languish!

Last summer a friend of mine wrote to me that she wanted I should come down and make her a visit.

"My brother Joseph is here," she wrote. "One of the best men in the world, too. His only fault is that he won't have any thing to do with the women if he can help it. He needs some one to take care of him, and who can do that for any man as a wife can? I want you to come down and stay a good long time, and I do really hope Joseph will fall in love with you, and set my heart at rest about him, by getting married and settling down in life."

That is what Mrs. Green wrote, and you can not know what beatific thoughts arose in my lonely bosom as I thought of what might be!

What might be! Sad words! As sad as what might have been! My feelings overcome me. I must stop and dry my eyes.

Well, I resolved to go down and make my dear friend, Mrs. Green, a visit. I wrote to her that I was coming. She wrote that her brother should meet me at the depot.

I went. When I got off the train I saw a man of about forty waiting with a buggy. I knew who it was the moment I set eyes on him. It was Mr. Bliss! My heart told me so. Was I looking at my future husband? I asked myself the question as I stood there on the platform waiting for him to come and speak to me. You can not imagine the rapture of that moment. I felt that there was something congenial about that man. I feel so still—but—

Ah me! that but! I can not think of it calmly! Excuse these tears of mine!

He came up and asked if I was Miss Patton. My heart fluttered so that I could hardly answer that I was.

He drove up to the steps and I got in. He seemed a very modest kind of man. Just the kind that I do admire. Ah me! My tears again!

We started. I spoke something about the beautiful scenery. He gave the horse an awful whack with the whip, and mercy me! The horse started into a gallop with a jerk and my teeth dropped out!

Wasn't it awful! Just think of it. I knew they were in the bottom of the wagon somewhere, but I didn't dare to look for them. I thought I should faint. I managed to draw down my veil, but my voice was so different that he looked at me to see what the matter was. I kept looking around in the bottom of the buggy, when I could get a chance to, to see if I could see any thing of my teeth. He asked me what I had lost. I told him nothing. The truth should not be spoken at all times.

By and by I began to talk again. I couldn't repress the swellings of my soul. The sadness of my youthful heart burst out into song, and I began to warble as the birds do, because they can not help it. I have a sweet voice. I have seen people with tears in their eyes when I sung. Often they turn away to hide the emotion that overcomes them.

Some way Mr. Bliss didn't seem to appreciate it. I think his soul is not so divinely attuned to harmony as mine. Why, I have sat for hours with my accordion, and sang, and sung, till my soul seemed all ready to soar away to the far blue depths of boundless, glorious and magnificent infinity!

As I said, Mr. Bliss didn't seem to like music, for he hit the horse another awful whack, that came near pitching me headfirst into the bottom of the buggy, the animal jumped so.

"Don't you like singing?" I ventured to ask, sweetly.

"Not much," answered Mr. Bliss.

"Oh, I do," I said. "I could sit and sing myself away to everlasting bliss!"

I didn't think what I was saying till I'd said it, and the minute the words had left my lips that man up and gave the poor horse an unmerciful cut of the whip, that made him jump so quickly that it jerked my back hair and bonnet right off my head!

Dear me! I was so mortified. I haven't much to speak of in the way of hair, and I do suppose I looked strange. At any rate Mr. Bliss looked scared. He seemed to think my hair was coming out by the roots.

"Whoa! Whoa!" he yelled to the horse, but that fractious animal had got started, and he hadn't any idea of stopping right away. Mr. Bliss reined him up into a fence corner, and the buggy came up in a jerk against a big stone, and, mercy me! I went sailing right out of the vehicle into a great blackberry bush, tearing my new blue dress terribly!

I was mad then! I couldn't help it! Such a wretch of a man. First jerking my teeth right out of my head, and then the hair off of it, and then pitching me out of the buggy at the risk of breaking my neck or limbs! I sat there, and burst into tears.

"Don't!" said Mr. Bliss, evidently half-scared to death. "Don't! I'll get your wig! Don't cry."

He started off on a canter, and I saw him re-connoiter a mud-pond with a few rods back; and then he got a pole and commenced fishing in it. Pretty soon he succeeded in getting what he was angling for, and came running back with my back-hair and bonnet dangling on the end of a ten-foot pole, for all the world as if he were afraid of them.

"There they be, ma'am," said he, poking them out toward me, all wet and dripping mud.

I took them and held them out at arm's

length to keep from soiling my dress, and sat there, waiting for him to assist me out of my unpleasant perch in the blackberry bush.

"Here's your teeth, ma'am," said the wretch, picking them up in the buggy. I do believe he thought I was likely to come all to pieces by the way he looked at me.

Oh, I was so mad! If it had been almost any one else but the man I half-expected to share my future life with! And he looked so—so—well, disgusted, that I hadn't any patience with the brute. Men can be so unreasonable. They can't bear with our weaknesses and innocent deceptions; but they can dye their hair, and wear wigs, and land knows what they don't do to deceive us poor unsuspecting female women. But it's all right because they're men! Pretty men, some of them!

"I'd like to have you help me out of this, if you please," said I. He came rather reluctantly and helped me out of the bushes. My dress was all tatters, and it cost seventy-five cents a yard, too.

"I won't ride another step with you," said I, firmly. "A man that can't drive better than you can, oughtn't to be trusted with a horse. You've given my nerves such a turn that I shan't get over it in a week, if I ever do," and at the recollection of it I thought I should faint.

"Oh, ma'am, don't!" said he, hopping about like a turkey. "Don't, ma'am," as I leaned toward him, almost unconscious of what I was doing. I never saw a man in such distress. I didn't know but he would faint. I drooped still further toward him, and came pretty near falling into his arms. But the wretch jumped back, and by a powerful effort of my will, I regained my almost vanished consciousness, and sat down on a stone. He evidently thought I was dying, for he gave a howl that was like a war-whoop, and snatched off his hat and made for a puddle of water, and before I could tell what he was going to do, he was back, and the water was running down my neck, and all over my dress, and I was half-strangled, and so blind I couldn't see a thing. The brute had thrown it right into my face. I knew my color would be ruined. I had cried carefully, and in a prudent manner. Now he must up and add to my already terrible list of misfortunes by making me look like an Indian with streaks of war-paint on. I own I do paint a trifle, occasionally. All women of taste do. He might have known it, too.

"Do let me help you into the buggy," he pleaded. "What! Mrs. Green thinks I see you come afoot, and me with the buggy?"

"I don't care what she thinks," said I, witheringly. "I'm not going to set my foot into that buggy with you again. I'm a woman, and when I say a thing I mean it." I know my eyes flashed in glorious indignation.

"Well then, you ride and I'll lead the horse," proposes Mr. Bliss, wiping his face, and sighing as if he wished himself anywhere but there.

"Well, I'll do that," said I, and he helped me in and we started.

We got to Mrs. Green's without any more adventures. When we drove up to the door he helped me out.

"Here's your teeth, ma'am," said he, handing them out. "I'd left them with my back hair on the seat. And here's your wig. Is that all?"

The wretch!

"I can't marry her," I heard him tell Mrs. Green, one day; "I'm afraid she'd come entirely to pieces. How'd I put her together again?"

Oh the brute! I don't know as I'd have married him after that, if he'd asked me to.

Oh me! I'm so lonely. I pine for a congenial companion. The millennium is slow in coming. I wait, and languish.

Young Detective Joe.

BY FRANK S. FINN.

JOE BODGERS leaned his somewhat stunted form against the lamp-post, and gave a vacant stare into the dressmaker's shop that stood opposite. Joe was no judge of the fashions, and didn't know a tuck from a ruffle, or whether the hats and bonnets were those of the present day, or as belonging to the last century.

Joe was much too young to be in love, or one might have thought he gazed into the window to get a peep at the pretty girls who were measuring off yards of ribbon, or putting the last touch to some fair maiden's head-gear.

"I wish I was President of the United States," I doas.

I guess these shops would have to come down on their prices somewhat considerably. The idea of some women a-flopping through the streets, like ships under full sail, and me with a poor mother at home, with just enough to cover her. I'm a good mind to go in and ask 'em to give me a dress and a bunnet for her. I guess they wouldn't laugh as they do, when the rich coves goes a palavering round 'em."

This was what Joe soliloquized. He was sniping his eyes and clenching his hands, as though he considered the whole world was to blame because his mother was poor. He did not notice a man, who was coming down the street, until he stood directly in front of him and asked him what he was so earnestly thinking about.

He was not a very attractive-looking personage, this man; he appeared careworn and troubled, and his clothes looked as though they had seen better days. There was a stoop in his shoulders and a woe about his hat.

"What are you thinking about, boy?" asked the man.

"Nothing worth a ton of gold. I was wishing the streets were filled with gold, and that I had the carting of it off," answered Joe.

"There's plenty of gold lying around loose in some of the stores. Why don't you help yourself to it?" questioned the man.

"I haven't grown up big enough for that yet."

"You're too honest to steal, I suppose?"

"I wasn't you'd soon see me fagged out in a gallivanting style, that's what I think."

The man scrutinized the boy's face carefully, for he was accustomed to read a person's character in his countenance, and he decided that Joe was to be trusted, and that he could aid him in a little scheme he had then in his mind, a matter which needed help.

"Wouldn't you like to earn a little money?" asked the man.

"I'm so out of that way, I shouldn't know how to set about it," answered Joe.

"I have a plan that I think you will like, and which will help us both. But it is of a private nature, so we must go somewhere where we may not be observed."

"You might come to my mother's house."

"Can she be trusted?"

"She is my mother, sir, and would rather wear an old worn-out dress, than beg, borrow or steal one."

And there was a straightening up of the stumpy figure, as though his dignity was quite hurt, as perhaps it was.

Well, well, lad, I meant no harm. I did not think you would take offense. I was poor, I hadn't no feelin's, but you was wrong there, for I haven't sold out my stock as yet. And I'm not a-going to put it up at auction, neither."

After more words had passed between them,

Joe led his new acquaintance to his mother's one room in a tenement house. Joe's mother was scrubbing at the washboard, and Joe, with a flourish, introduced Mr. Magrow, the man whom he had recently come across, to her.

This stranger communicated to mother and son a plan whereby they would be both richer and happier.

It was a long consultation they held, and the time was quite late when the party broke up.

That same night as the clock chimed the midnight hour, Magrow and Joe might have been seen carefully and cautiously wending their way through many a street, until they came to the rear of a large building, somber-looking and dull.

"There, Joe," said Magrow, "that is the pane you are to crawl through. Get on my shoulders and you will be able to reach it. You must let yourself down on the other side and make your way up the stairs. It is the first door on the left. Creep carefully into the coal-box, and keep as quiet as a mouse. In about an hour we can carry out our plans, and we will then discover who is right and who is wrong."

Joe obeyed Magrow, and got through the window-pane. It was not far from the floor on the other side. He found every thing as the man had described it to be, and he took up his station on the inside of the coal-box. His situation was not unlike that of Aladdin in the fairy story.

Joe thought it would be a rather bad speculation if Magrow was to act in the same manner that the magician did, and leave him locked up, although if he could find a wonderful lamp, it might prove very profitable to him. He was aroused from his meditations by hearing a heavy step on the floor. He peeped through a hole in the box, and noticed that there was a young man in the room, who had lighted the gas. Joe could see at once that he was in an office, but he kept quiet. The young man appeared to be quite communicative with himself, for he gave way to the following soliloquy:

"Every thing works as I could wish. Old Archer thinks me a saint, and I have so ingratiated myself into his graces that he'll believe all I say to be gospel truth. I've done a neat job in making him think Magrow isn't as honest as one ought to be, but I must have money to pay my gambling debts, and, as I can't make it all right with my salary, I must filch it from the boss. Somebody's got to bear the blame, and why shouldn't Magrow? Let me see what Sam has to say to me."

He took from his pocket a letter, which he read aloud; it ran as follows:

"JAKE—I must have that money to-morrow morning early. Remember, that it is money I want and not excuses. You must beg, or borrow, or steal it. I care not how you get it, so long as you have it for me."

The young man bit his lip, and, dipping his pen into the ink, he scrawled off a few lines at the foot of the letter he had just read. He had a way of reading aloud to himself every thing he wrote, so that Joe got the benefit of his pen and ink thoughts. His answer was to this effect:

"SAM:—You shall have the cash, but I shall have to open old Archer's safe; but no matter. I can turn round to the boss that if Magrow was only a Christian he wouldn't be tempted to pilfer other people's property. You have no idea how nicely I can pull the wool over the governor's eyes."

He hunted about for an envelope, but, finding none, he went into the adjoining room to procure it. As he left, Joe came from his hiding-place, and made his way toward the desk that the young man had left. He seized the letter, and, with all the caution and stealthiness of a cat, he went down stairs to the place where he had entered. He climbed up to the pane, and made his escape through it. There he met Magrow, to whom he gave the dangerous document, saying as he did so: "There, if I haven't got you the wonderful lamp, my name ain't Joe Thomas Bodgers."

The young man, Jake, returned to the room five minutes after Joe had left it, and looked about for his letter—unsuccessful, of course. Long did he search for it, and not a corner did he leave unnoticed. He was nervous and somewhat frightened, and could not account for the strange disappearance. With a skeleton key, he opened the safe and extracted quite a pile of bills, exclaiming, as he did so:

"If the letter is found, it will bring me my ruin. I will secure what I can while I may, and be out of this city before the discovery takes place."

Armed with his booty, he was about to leave the office, when he found himself in the custody of a policeman, by whom he was arrested.

Joe had run for one immediately after handing the letter to Magrow. Jake was found guilty and received a severe punishment, while Magrow was reinstated in his master's favor, and procured a situation for Joe in the office. The boy was as honest as truth, and true as steel. There was no more lounging against lamp-posts for him now, and no worry for new dresses for his mother, but he ever went afterwards by the name of "Young Detective Joe."

School Books, Improved Styles.—A Western paper wants modern improvements worked into school reading books, and offers the following as a sample of the sort that would be up to the spirit of the age:

"The horse is on his nest. He is a fine horse. Can he make his mile in two minutes? I guess he could if he was on the express train."

"The goose is on her roost. She is a fine quadruped, and has a tender tenor voice. Can the goose fly far? No, neither the goose nor the rhinoceros can fly far."

"Here is a man. He is a fireman. He belongs to No. 10. If you are a good boy, you will some day be an angel like the fireman. It is a dangerous thing to be a fireman. They sometimes get their heads broken."

Here is the gas works. It is a high building. All our Congressmen are born here. Do Congressmen ever steal? You may be sure they do."

"Do you see that small boy? He is a good boy, and supports his mother by selling newspapers. His father don't dare to work any more now."

"Here is the picture of a young widow. See how 'sad' she looks. Her husband could not pay her dry goods bills and so he—died. Do you think she will get another man? She will try hard."

"Here is the sea side. You see that 'swell' here drinking spring water? What is he here for? For his health. Will he get it? Yes, if his father's money holds out, and she don't get engaged first to that fellow with the paste diamond."

"What is the man doing there? He is counting over Government greenbacks; he is a public official. See how fast he counts. Those one-dollar bills on the left hand side are the money he is to return to the government; those ten-dollar bills on the right are the money he is going to put in his pocket. It is a good thing to be a public official. Now you're talking!"

"Here is the face of a reporter. See how joyful he looks. He has just heard that a man has cut his own throat, and he is going for the item. Should you like to be a reporter, and get licked on dark nights, and see dead persons and climb up four pairs of stairs?"

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 8, 1873.

The SATURDAY JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

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A Beautiful, Brilliant and Bewitching

ROMANCE OF LOVE, WAR AND SECRET SERVICE,

With a Real Live Princess for Heroine, is the new serial—the first chapters to be given in the coming number of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, viz.:

NADIA,

THE RUSSIAN SPY;

OR,

The Brothers of the Starry Cross.

BY CAPT. FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "RED RAJAH," "THE ROCK RIDER," ETC.,

As already announced, this splendid romance involves the story of the allied Siege of Sebastopol, and introduces as parties, in its deeply exciting drama, numerous celebrated characters, viz.: The Czar Nicholas; the Prince Gallitzin; the present Czar, then Grand Duke; the Police General of the Czar's Secret Service; the Mysterious Brotherhood of the Starry Cross; the beautiful and devoted Princess, who, to save Russia, played the perilous role of Spy in the Allied Camp; the noble lover of the fair Princess, Lord Raglan; and many of the officers and men of the opposing hosts.

With this brilliant array of characters the spirited and skillful author produces a story of lasting interest and of commanding merit—such as will give the reader a new conception of the power of the Historic Romance. It involves fact and history with almost minute precision, yet uses these facts merely as the silken thread on which to string its beads of gold. Woman's power and truth—her ability to do great deeds and her ever-abiding womanliness—are truly elements of a novel and captivating nature, which the author uses with rare spirit and effect.

No romance of the year can compare with this in romantic interest and worth, and none, we are sure, will read with heartier satisfaction. Its field is so new—its incidents so novel—its characters so imposing, that it contributes quite a feature to the year's popular literature, and adds another to the series of successes which our writers are offering, in rapid succession, to the lovers of what is best in popular romance and story.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—The frequency with which the columns of the SATURDAY JOURNAL are plundered by weeklies that deal in reproduced matter, shows the estimation in which our paper is held—which is a gratifying evidence of popularity, but when papers like the Cincinnati Saturday Night transfer column after column from our pages without a sign of credit or acknowledgment, it compels us to remind publishers that the SATURDAY JOURNAL is copyrighted, and that it positively demands, as a concession of the privilege of quoting from its pages, full and distinct credit, both to author and paper. Otherwise we can not permit any appropriation of our well-paid-for and exclusive contributions.

—Speaking of well-paid-for contributions, we have before us a volume of poems in which the author rates and rails at publishers for their want of appreciation of the just value of poetry, adding, as a convincing clause: "If each and every piece in this book had been offered to publishers of magazines and popular papers, they" (the poems, we suppose,) "would not have brought ten cents on the dollar." Probably not. If most of them had been offered to us we should have wanted remuneration for publishing them.

The fact is, we believe, that, as a class, poets overrate the literary and publisher's value of their rhymes. Not one poem in fifty that is offered, and not one in ten that is accepted, has any appreciable commercial value; and publishers give poem after poem place merely because the contribution is good enough in itself to see the light—not because it ought to be put in print. The number of the latter is so small that, if any reputable journal paid for only what was helpful and of intrinsic reading value the paid-for poems would be few indeed.

The Detroit Tribune man says: "Take a double-barreled gun and shoot into a crowd, and every other man you hit would be a poet." This, to the uninitiated, reads like a joke, but it is a joke with a nugget of fact behind it. The number of persons who write verses is incredibly large, and the number of those who write well is by no means small. Every week sees the little missives drift into editors' rooms in flocks, and it is an embarrassing sight sometimes, so many of the offerings are so really good. To ask pay of the publisher for these caprices of the fancy is about as absurd as for the robin to demand a dime for his morning welcome. To see them in print ought to be pay enough, and usually is; for a large majority of those who are now making reputations upon which to build their fortunes and their fame, are only too glad to be assisted in their literary apprenticeship—as all earlier efforts at work for the press are. Those who demand pay and receive it are the special few who have, first, written themselves into favor and literary value, and second, who have a head and heart schooled to their work. Of which we are anon.

—One of our corps of specialists has, like a sensible man, taken unto himself the next thing to a good wife, i. e., a good profession, as we learn from the Warren (Ill.) Sentinel, which says:

"Mr. Henry M. Avery (Maj. Max Martine) (Mohenes) to (Captain) (Detective and Adventurer) (Prof.) etc., who has so often contributed to the entertainment of our readers, has gone to Chicago and become a student in Rush Medical College. Mr. Avery has been reading with Dr. Pierce this year, and has formerly read with other physicians and attended lectures, so that he expects to graduate with the closing of the spring term, and hang out a shingle with M. D. attached. We wish him success."

And so do our readers, we are sure. A man who has seen the scalp-dance and danced it ought to become skillful with the scalpel; and one who, like the Major, has been "Big Medicine" to a half a dozen tribes of savages ought to be equally Big Medicine to a village like Chicago. Exchanging leaden pills for hyosciamus and opium is striking evidence of Christian progress. May the Major never lose his patience nor his patients! is our hearty good-speed.

SERMONETTE.

I.
"If you've any thing to do,
Let me whisper friend to you,
Who'll do it."

Yes, my friend, and do it at once, too. Procrastination never did one any good, as far as my knowledge of human affairs goes. You hear of a case of destitution, and, instead of going immediately to relieve it, you call a meeting at the hall, form resolutions, make long and flowery speeches, and probably forget, ere the meeting closes, what it was called for. While your fine speeches are being made the objects of your charity may be drawing nearer and nearer to the verge of eternity.

That's not the way to accomplish any thing. While you are talking you should be doing. Time is often wasted in talking, much more than is to one's advantage. Ten times better to be up and doing than thinking over what you ought to do.

You shan't back out by saying you don't know where to find objects for your charity and benevolence. There are oceans of cases awaiting you to relieve, but I don't wonder you never find them if you sit at home and expect others to do the work God has laid out for you. It is sweeter to bestow charity by your own hands than to leave it to a second person. It will do you good to frequent the haunts of the poor; it will show you how much worse others are off than you; it will make your mountains of troubles decrease to the size of mole-hills; it will make you more contented with your own lot when you find that your neighbor's is a harder one to bear.

If you want to save the inebriate, don't wait until he has brought misery upon his near and dear ones; check him when you see him entering the bar-room for the first time; don't wait until he has made his fifty visits there. It is easier to prevent an evil than to cure it; it's not a question as to the propriety of the act—it is a solemn duty given us to perform, to keep the man away from the alluring cup.

Again: when you see your employees looking tired and weary, let them have a rest; don't let them drag their lives out that you may gain a few more dollars, at the sacrifice of their health and strength. They are human beings as well as you are. Though you may be their employer, don't forget that they are fellow-men. Treat them like brothers, and command *it* at once.

Pay your workmen promptly. They need all you give them for their daily livelihood, and sometimes it isn't so easy for them to get credit at the butcher's or baker's. If you have to pay it some time, you might excise and say that not only have it off your mind, but have the extreme satisfaction of knowing that your promptness has saved your employees much trouble and annoyance.

This doing things immediately is the way to progress calmly and smoothly in this world. If you don't stop the leak in the vessel at the proper moment, you need not wonder that the ship sinks. If you don't put a veto now upon your children associating with evil company, you must not blame others should there be a moral wreck in your family and a guest of misery at your hearthstone.

Don't brood over your sorrows. Stir about and you will soon forget them—the longer you think of them the more miserable will you be. Give up murmuring at once, shake off your doleful countenance immediately.

We all have tasks to do; some of them are by no means agreeable; but, by performing them at once, they will seem less arduous and they are over the sooner, and the quicker it is done, the better for you.

If I want a favor done, and you go about it immediately, I'll put you on my list of "good" folks, but if you make excuses and say that you'll do it in the future, I wouldn't give a button of my old dress or even one snap of my finger for you. And, what's more, I mean it, too.

EVE LAWLESS.

DISAPPOINTED LIVES.

BECAUSE some of our plans have taken a wrong turn, is no reason the blight should strike deeper than the result shall last. The plans "gang agley," but in place of them we build up others; our hopes fail us in one spot, but we were made to be hopeful mortals, so we shift them to another.

Ah, what a blasphemy it is against the wise, kind Providence which shields us, to be perpetually whining out that life has no more charms, that disappointment has sapped to the roots all the goodness, the pleasures, the content which the earth should hold for every one of its living creatures.

Does the sun no longer shine? Does the breeze no longer blow? Is the blue sky clouded over, and is there no rift of brightness left for all the world beneath? Is the earth no longer clad in green? Have the birds ceased to sing, the flowers to bloom, the soil to be productive?

While all these things last, never say that life is a disappointment. Blessings are dispensed freely among us all, and if we care some with them, it is not more than the common lot. The high-bred man's station the greater responsibility which rests upon him, so why sigh for the unattainable with examples of the wear and tear of power in any situation of life always before us?

We are all prone to rear our idols. One falls, and so great is the fall thereof, we have no more to live for. The poor, fair figure, with feet of clay, has shut out our sight of heaven, has cut off the sunshine of the earth; and when in its impotency it fails, we are crushed along, we bury our faces in the dust and refuse to acknowledge the better aims, the truer objects which yet remain. But around us the world goes on the same. The shock which has struck us to the soil has not even stirred the current of humanity; it has not jarred a discord into the great harmony of nature. A tree may be blighted at its heart, but it still puts out its leaves; it dispenses its shade as gratefully as before. One deep sorrow may put it out of our power to be whole of heart as we have been; but no one sorrow or no culmination of sorrows can take away from us all our ability to do good. A cheerful, willing spirit is the best of gifts, and it is never beyond the reach of the most unfortunate. Cheerfulness must be cultivated to live. There are odds against it, but it is well worth the struggle and the trouble to put them down. Make our own lives bright, and we brighten the lives of those about us.

These disappointed lives that go darkling and fretting around us, if they were told they were of their own accord shutting out the sunshine they were born to enjoy, would they believe it? Let us look close that we pluck the beams out of our own eyes, and in so doing help to remove the motes from the eyes of our brothers.

J. D. B.

HUMAN SNAILS.

If there is one thing more disagreeable than another, to a person possessed of those exquisite media of torture yecept nerves, it is deliberation.

Nobody knows what an individual of nervous organization undergoes in the effort to adapt themselves to circumstances, and take things as they come. Life is a perpetual series of volcanic eruptions, suppressed at the point of the will, and if there is an occasional upheaval beyond the power of that regulator of the forces, it is considered evidence of total depravity by those human snails whose tranquillity nothing earthly—not uncharitably—has power to disturb. I sometimes really envy quiet, deliberate persons. It must be delightful to be always serene and composed amid the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds, but that is a high so profound I am certain I never shall reach it.

For I can never learn to "keep cool." If I want any thing, I want it right away, instantly. If I go to look for an article, I tumble everything into inextricable confusion, because I can't wait to be careful, and I always "haggle" the leaves of my magazines until they resemble the edge of a particularly ragged-toothed saw, in my impatience to get at their contents.

But some people are not at all troubled with superfluous energy. They never see the need of action, and only want to sit unmolested in some quiet corner and nurse their apathy. They always go about a piece of work as if they had time and eternity to do it in, and if they attempt to sharpen a pencil, or do any thing of that kind, for you, they make every motion with a degree of deliberation and precision that is enough to drive one distracted. I can not imagine that such people ever needed any soothing syrup when they were babies, though a dose of that pacifier is absolutely necessary to enable one to view their progress through this world with composure.

They do not visit you frequently because they "can not find time." They never answer a letter punctually for the same reason. They are never in haste, and always behind time. They have no vim, nor go-ahead-iveness, and they never do any thing.

Let no one blame children for being in a hurry. If they tear their clothes, or break something every time they move, it shows they are not slow. When they attain adult age they will make a mark of some kind in the world, for they possess energy. Commend me to a person, man, woman or child, who has the organ of Destructiveness well developed. Deliberation is what keeps the world in chains, mentally, morally and physically. We want energetic workers.

LETTIE ARLEY IRONS.

WORDS TO WOMEN.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, who is a great invalid, writing to Lemuel Moss, in this country, who sent to her for her likeness and some account of her life, in the course of her letter says:

"Nothing, with the approval of my own judgment, has been made public, or I would send it. I have a strong objection to sending my own likeness, for the same reason. Some of the most valuable works the world has ever seen we know not who is the author of; we only know God is the author of all. I do not urge this example upon others, but it is a deep-seated religious scruple in myself. I do not wish my name to remain, nor my likeness. That God alone should be remembered, I wish."

If I could really give the lessons of my life to my countrywomen and yours, (indeed, I feel look upon us as all one nation)—the lessons of my mistakes as well as of the rest—I would; but for this there is no time. I would only say, work—work in silence at first, in silence for years—it will not be time wasted. Perhaps in all your life it will be the time you will afterward find to have been best spent; and it is very certain that without it you will be no worker. You will not produce one "perfect work," but only a botch in the service of God."

Foolscap Papers.

Whitehorn's Address at a Pioneer Meeting.

MY DEAR FRIENDS—I am very proud to be able to meet so many of the early pioneers of Beaverville here this evening. This occasion will never be forgotten by me. Many of our earlier friends have left the busy scenes of life, but all who are present on this occasion have been spared; and nothing can be so cheering to my heart as to meet old friends who have not passed away. I feel forty years younger to-day than I ever felt before in all my life.

I think this meeting will never pass from my memory till the last recollection of it fades entirely away. How the early scenes of long ago spread out before me as I gaze upon the white hairs and the bald heads around me! The tears rise to my mouth, and the words stick in my eyes—pardon me, I am too full, too full.

How many ear-trumpets do I see among the friends of my youth! how many spectacles with iron rims! and how many good old-fashioned clothes!

When I look upon the prosperity and thrift of this busy city of Beaverville, my mind is carried far back to the time when it was nothing else but nothing, or less—when the historical Indian chased the frightened deer to put salt on its tail, up Main street, and didn't have to look out for lamp-posts, or four-wheeled drays; when he gayly chased the pole-cat around town, and didn't wait till he came to the corner of a street to turn; for there was a time when this industrious city was nothing but a forest, and the forest was not a city.

I am proud to say that I was the first white child born in this place; there wasn't another human being within miles of here, and I was a awful lonesome. I didn't know whether to settle down here and grow up with the country or not. I was quite young then; my recollection, good as it is, goes back no further than that; and I remember, my fellow-pioneers, that even then I was glad I was the first one whose name was on the parish register, when there was no parish, and no register, either. All this is on my mind as fresh as the day I was born.

I always overjoyed to say that I am one of the early settlers of this place, although some people intimate that I am the latest settler they ever knew; and I am willing to admit that a good many settled here since I did.

My memory goes back very vividly to the time when, upon the very site of this stately and commodious hall, with its freestone front and elaborate stories, stood a small, unassuming cabin, where hard cider was sold at two glasses for five cents. Oh, the ruthless hand of modern innovation! how has it swept away the landmarks of our younger days! even the little old brewery was elbowed out of existence by that pretentious hotel over there on the corner.

I remember I was the first angler that was ever in this town. The first elected without a dissenting vote; the other man was elected marshal, without opposition—there were only two men of us in the town at the time, and we could stand on the top of yon hill and distinctly see two log-cabins.

My mind goes so far back into antiquity that I remember the times when farmers gave four pecks to the bushel, four quarters to the cord of wood, twelve good eggs for a dozen; and milk thinner than a shingle was unknown (now-days they wash their milk and never wholly wring the water out of it). This is going back a good ways, but it is true. I also remember well the time when the noble red-men of the forest were here and sounded their war-whoops; it frightened me a little but didn't disturb me much—those Indians were here with a show.

But while my heart is crowded with many tender and pleasing recollections, there comes the sorrowful thought that many of us present are a year older than we were this time last year, although I am not prepared to vouch for it. Many of us have been getting old for the last fifty or sixty, and even seventy years, if we haven't got any thing else; and some of us will be older if we live and nothing happens; for time flies now at the rate of twelve months a year since the invention of railroads and telegraphs; and I am grieved to assert that some of us will never live to be boys again. A new generation has already taken our old places in Beaverville, and a younger generation is in the school—or running away from it to-day—and the places which know us now shall soon know us no more any more, and if any of you have any property which you wish to dispose of on short notice and long time, I hope you will let me know after the meeting is over; and I hope I will not be forgotten—in your last testaments. I have done!

Woman's World.

Boards and Trustees—Husbands and Wives—Whose Fault is it?—Life in Two Rooms.

I BOARD, and although I belong to that happy class of boards, the workers, who have not time to devote to gossip and scandal, I am an object of pity. Do I not mount four stair-cases to my little room on the fifth floor; and when I get up there is not my fire always down? Is not my water-pitcher always empty? Is not the threadbare carpet forever unworn? Am I not in such mortal fear of the slatternly chambermaid, and the hard-eyed landlady, I would not speak of one of my grievances for the world? When I go down to dinner am I not sure that I will be the last boarder who will be helped? that the outside cut of roast, or the leg of the chicken will certainly be reserved for my plate? that on Friday I will surely eat the tail of the fish? And though I am neither greedy nor choice, I don't like the indignity of the thing, nor the coolly contemptuous looks of the other women-boarders, who have husbands who take the first, second and third floor rooms for them.

I know I am really happier than the poor creatures whose lives are being gnawed away with the worm of care, the plague of idleness. They never address their conversation at table to me; they talk to each other but at me. They do not love each other; they certainly do not love me. They, poor creatures, have a few more comforts than I enjoy, but I really believe they are far more miserable. They don't know how to do any thing. Not one of them make their dresses or their undergarments. They dust their rooms and furniture, and quarrel with the slovenly chambermaid about the sweeping and the fires. I don't believe one of them knows how to make her own fire. What do they do? Don't ask me; I'm ashamed to tell you. They run from room to room, gossiping and scandalizing each other all the morning; after luncheon they dress and go out. They shop for a cravat, or a new fraise, or a ribbon from 2 A.M. till 4 P.M., and from 10th to 23d street on Broadway. Then they conclude they can not be suited to that thoroughfare, and must run over to Sixth avenue. After four or five fashionable women will be seen on Broadway, and two more hours must be killed before dinner. They reach the door of our boarding-house at about half-past five, about the hour they exhausted hands get up from Wall and Nassau streets. They put on their finishing touches to their toilets, and come down to dinner and their daily dish of detraction and discontent. There's one advantage I certainly have over them. I am hungry enough to eat the overdone beef, and to bolt the half-rare vegetables. Yes, another: I am too busy and preoccupied to notice or feel the cuts they make at me and at each other. Why are they so ill-natured? For the very best of reasons: they have no elevating, ennobling occupation. But would living in two rooms, and doing their own cooking and housework be elevating and ennobling? Yes, I answer unhesitatingly. No idle woman—no idle man being can be self-developing their minds and hearts; and no human being can be happy who is not developing the best part of their nature. It is in the nature of man and woman to be developed by suffering, endurance at any rate. Perfect happiness is only to be caught at intervals. The rest from labor; the gratification of the mind when we have accomplished something, be that something ever so small in the direction of self-abnegation for others, gives a glow of pleasure that no petty triumph of vanity or ambition could ever bestow.

Let me not be misunderstood, however. I do not mean to throw the blame of all this false boarding-house life altogether on my own sex. The husband should be the guide, the master of the situation. Too often it is his misdirected ambition and false pride rather than his wife's vanity that keeps them in a boarding-house. He is ashamed to say he lives in "apartments." He prefers that his wife should be the helpless, dressed-up doll that he comes home to at the boarding-house. He would find no charm in the same woman in a neat calico or delaine gown, and a white apron worn while cooking the dinner and serving, and washing the dishes. He would be ashamed to invite his friends to such a home. He prefers to take them to his boarding-house and have his wife entertain them in the parlor in a silk dress, and with ribbons in her hair and jewels in her ears. Her silly tawdrel and gossip scandal are really more interesting to him than her conversation would be, if she was a woman who knew how to work with her hands and cultivate her mind by reading in the intervals of domestic labor. Our men must cultivate a taste for a different type of woman if we wish to see any real improvement. I do not think so, I know that most men prefer butterflies to bees. They would like perhaps to have the two combined, but they must remember that some sacrifice of their artificial tastes must be made before we can cure this domestic disease, the hotel and boarding-house life of America.

EMILY VERDEY.

A bevy of heroes are Boone, Kenton, and the Men of the Forest Fort, who are matched against the wily Mingo and the implacable Shawnee. The whole great future of these men seems to loom up before them as they enter upon their careers at Point Pleasant. Their innate bravery, agility, honesty and faithfulness to friends are the features which this "over true tale" brings out with immense power and interest. As a record of Boone's First Trail and Kenton's true Test of his qualities as ranger, The Wolf Draw will be valued by every lover of Wilderness and Indian stories.

Readers and Contributors.

To CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepared for publication. No MSS. preserved for future editions. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only when stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS.; as "copy" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note also paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. MSS. unsuitable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find it our ever ready to give their offerings early attention. Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

The following contributions we place on the accepted list, viz.: "My Pickpocket," "Pistols for Two," "Idols," "A Pair of Bracelets," "A Warm Welcome," "Do!n! Their Duty," "My Affinity," "A Wife's Race," "Miss Prof. Jones," "Miss Leighton's Pride," "Out of Gotham."

"Mrs. John Major's Solace" is good enough for use, but is rather a magazine than a "popular" story. It is diffuse; it dwells long on minor things; it has but a thread of story to a filling of chat, gossip and inference. The popular reader reverses this order, demanding much incident and action and very little disquisition on "aside" topics.

We shall have to decline these: "The Hero of the Lake," "To Helen," "The Set of Furs," "Gerard Aldrich's Failure," "An All-Hallow Story," "Uno Death," "Her Husband's Anguish," "The Ghost Detective," "Too Late," "Mr. Plunkett's Mistake," "That Fellow from Boston," "The Deacon's Love Affair," "In the Country," "The Deacon's Anguish," "A Woman's Choice," "My Country Cousin," "Marriage," "Max Rothelme's Revenge," "An Old Story," "Ben's Coming Home," "A Night in Cocohote Pass," "O. W. Washington," "Major Max Martine wrote a 'Old Pen-Paw,' 'Sharp Eye,' 'Tangled Trail'—ten-cent novels.

ARCHIE A. J. We suppose the "Dictionary" referred to was Dr. Roget's "Thesaurus." Write to Gould & Lincoln, Boston.

We thank "Crape Myrtle" for her assurances. If we did not regard the offerings as worthy we should not question in regard to their originality.

P. B. S. "The Pickpocket," 90 cents; "The Witches of New York," 90 cents; "The Ace of Spades" is out of print. Of the other novel named we know nothing.

ISAAC LE M. Can't say we admire the specimen submitted. Our audience likes sprightly things, but not that which is rough and coarse. You are a printer, yet use the *winch* for vines, and make other like mistakes. The good printer always writes his copy in ink.

JACKSON. A half-dozen cures for warts are available. Touch them (after careful paring down to the "quick") with lunar caustic. Or apply acetic acid after the same process of paring. Warts of four applications will rid your skin of the excrescences.

MARCUS. You mean orators, living or dead, we suppose. Sheridan is said to have made the most brilliant speech; Burke the most scholarly; the elder Pitt the most convincing; the younger Pitt the most accurate; Fox the most argumentative or forcible. But, Britain is not a land of orators. Her speakers are, almost without exception, mere declaimers. Her declaimers are, to our popular forms of public speaking, is greatly surprised, in visiting England, at the singularly dull and methodic manner of the English pulpit and platform orators.

MISS C. S. Yes; we have seen the notice referred to, of our female journalists. The whole thing is as absurd as its statement of the several ladies' ages. Grace Greenwood is not thirty years old, but over fifty. Kate Field is not twenty-two but more than ten years older; Nellie Hutchinson is not seventeen but twenty-five, and so on. The notice in the *Illustrated* is a piece of green wax, even when Phoebe Cary was alive, is absurd. Unless in a good sense, the notice in the *Illustrated* puns are as far beneath Phoebe Cary's exquisite enunciation as "Docticks" or John G. Saxe are beneath Tom Hood or Sidney Smith. It is not possible to call Grace at the expense of her deceased friend. Phoebe Cary has no "successor."

STUDIO. We know Solomon was the wise man, but Plato was wiser. Plato was a pupil of Socrates, and excelled his great teacher in the clearness of his mind, in his vision and the depth of his wisdom. He can today be studied with great profit through his preserved "Dialogues." The *Illustrated* is a piece of green wax, even when Phoebe Cary was alive, is absurd. Unless in a good sense, the notice in the *Illustrated* puns are as far beneath Phoebe Cary's exquisite enunciation as "Docticks" or John G. Saxe are beneath Tom Hood or Sidney Smith. It is not possible to call Grace at the expense of her deceased friend. Phoebe Cary has no "successor."

MORAWA DUTCHMAN. The Canadian standard of weight per bushel for grain and seed is as follows, in pounds: wheat 60; corn 56; barley 48; buckwheat 48; oats 34; clover seed 60; rye seed 56; timothy seed 48.

ALABAMA H. H. We are told by a very experienced horseman that judging the age of a horse by his mouth is very uncertain. You can tell to a certainty within one year, until he is six years old, then you must judge from general appearance. Some horses, however, have the same number of mares have tusks as horses have none.

AGRICULTURIST. You can improve seed for planting by mixing lime, plaster and bone dust, and sowing the seed thereon. The produce of the seed thus steeped is said to be twofold.

S. R. C. Currant jelly, a dessert spoonful; a teaspoonful of sweet potato oil; after in half a pint of boiling water, is a good and simple remedy for a cough. Take a dessert spoonful of the mixture at night when going to bed.

WALTER D. You are mistaken; the name Hannibal is derived from the words *Hannu* and *Bal*, and was given to the great soldier by the people by uniting his name with their god, on account of the exalted opinion they held of him. It is a thing worthy of consideration that the four greatest men of the world had a miserable ending; for instance, Hannibal died by poison administered to him by his own wife, and his nearest friend; Alexander set a city on fire and died in a drunken debauch, while Napoleon died in exile.

C. S. I. Maps, globes and dials were first invented by Anaximander in the sixth century before Christ, and were introduced into England by Bartholomew Columbus in the year 1489.

GEORGE ELLIOT. Marriage anniversaries are now divided as follows: The "paper marriage," at two and a half years after wedding; the "wooden," at five; the "tin" at ten; the "crystal" at fifteen; the "linen" at twenty; the "silver" at twenty-five; the "gold" at fifty; and the "diamond" at seventy-five years after marriage.

MASON. The first lodge of Freemasons in this country was established in Boston, in 1733. The body now is the most powerful secret society in the land. They are scattered over all the civilized world, and it is said, are found even among the savage races.

LOTTA. If you will view the tongue of a butterfly through a microscope you will find it very nearly resembles a coiled-up snake.

LIBRARIAN. There was a public library established in Rome 107 years B. C., and in Alexandria 284 years A. D.—both of which were wholly destroyed. The latter was restored by the emperor Constantine, and contained the countless treasures of Greek, Roman, Arabian (or Egyptian), Assyrian, Persian and Hebrew works. Learned men never think of that loss without a sigh.

ANNA L. America introduced chocolate into England, we believe, in 1529, and wild turkeys were sent over about the same time. The word chocolate is Indian—choco sound, and *itla* water. It was made by the Indians by tritinating the roasted cocoanut in a heated stone mortar until a rich paste was formed.

HARD-DRINKER. In the United States there are 29,000 liquor distilleries; capital invested in manufacturing of liquors \$27,000,000. That every dollar of this sum represents one hundred and fifty dollars is scarcely overstating the richness of the traffic.

ANXIETY. You should positively forbid your boys using tobacco, as it is decidedly injurious, for it causes softening of the bones, injures the brain and spinal marrow, affects the stomach and liver, and causes the blood to be impoverished. Of course a mild tobacco is far less injurious than the coarser and stronger kinds. A French physician has investigated the effects of smoking upon thirty-eight boys between the ages of nine and fifteen, with the following result: Twenty-seven presented distinct symptoms of nicotine poisoning. In twenty-two there were

SHUT THE DOOR SOFTLY.

BY ALBERT H. WARD.

Shut the door softly,
My babe is at rest;
The child of my bosom
Sleeps sound on my breast;
While the angels in silence
Their bright vigils keep;
Shut the door softly,
My babe is asleep.

Shut the door softly,
For the angels of love
Are waiting her sweet soul
To bright realms above;
Where pleasures immortal
Are lasting and true;
Shut the door softly,
My babe is asleep.

Shut the door softly,
Her soul is at rest;
In that bright home eternal,
Forevermore blest,
While I, in deep anguish,
Sit here and weep;
Shut the door softly,
My babe is asleep.

Answer for Answer.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"I wonder how you can think of such a thing, Charlewick! Why, it is simply preposterous—the idea of you wanting to marry a common country girl—*you*, a Charlewick!"

Mr. Charlewick's handsome lips curled, and he gave rather an unnecessary jerk to the collar of his astrakhan overcoat; the night was bitterly cold, and even in the jam that came crushing out of Niblo's, he felt chilly.

His voice was low, yet full of intensest scorn, and young Charlewick's fair face, so like his father's, reddened under his father's sarcasm. Lover-like, he began to plead his cause.

"But she is so beautiful, father; such a sweet—"

Mr. Charlewick shrugged his shoulders.

"Spare me, I beg, my dear boy. I can imagine precisely what you will say. What say you to oysters at Delmonico's?"

Charlewick flushed angrily. This father of his was so cold, so unimpressive, so contemptuously contemptuous. What was he to do? Go on loving dear little Bessie Plume, brave his father's cool wrath, that was all the worse for being so cool, or—and the very thought stabbed him like a knife—give her up entirely?

He had only known her a very short time—hardly a month. It was since Bessie had come to the Ayres, her cousin, for a three months' visit, but he had had ample time to be smitten to the heart with her beautiful eyes, so bonny brown, and her sweet girlish face, with its pink cheeks, and olive complexion.

She was pretty, Charlewick knew that; and as high-bred and dainty in her ways as the Ayre girls dared to be, only Mr. Charlewick, Sr., did not know that, and so long as he utterly refused to listen to Charlewick's "rhapsodies," how was he to know how sweet, how equal in every respect she was to him, or his son?

Charlewick was moody as they walked briskly up Broadway, in the cold, startled mid-night; he was saying to himself, over and over, he would see if Bessie cared for him. He would ask her, and then his father might—do his worst.

He felt a little savage, too, to think that his father, who took such an interest in all the pretty girls (as a rich, handsome widower generally does), never even condescended to ask Bessie's name; and then, as they were joined by a party of gentlemen bound for their destination, Charlewick was forced to drive away his thoughts.

The gas was turned down to a delightful twilight darkness in Bessie Plume's room, and she, in her scarlet cashmere wrapper, with her golden chestnut hair unbound and streaming over her shoulders, sat looking soberly at the fire in the grate.

An hour ago she and her cousin, Joe Ayre, had come home from Niblo's; an hour ago she had been so quietly happy at the brief glimpse she caught of Charlewick's handsome head as he, all unconscious of her proximity, had gone, with the crowd, out the big doors; and an hour ago she had had a pretty sharp blow dealt her, for she had heard Charlewick, *per se*, when he spoke so decidedly with the words we have quoted at the commencement.

She was just beginning to watch for young Charlewick's coming; she had learned to distinguish his footstep, she was a little given to dreaming about him; and now—Well, thank Heaven, she was not so deeply in love but that she would be able to live over it. And yet—and it was the only tribute to her first girlish love she ever paid—she felt her lips quiver for a second; and the sudden rush of tears to her eyes she allowed to drop, one by one.

Then she decided that, although she was determined to forget him, she would cut her visit short, and go home, where he would not be able to see her, where there was no chance of her being tempted to become the daughter-in-law of a man who held her in such unmitigated contempt.

Besides, there were other people who liked her; and, as she went to sleep, there was in her dreamy mind a vision of some one—Ed Ornton it was, who would dearly like to have introduced his mother to Bessie as her mother-in-law—peeping laughingly, triumphantly, over Mr. Charlewick, Sr.'s, astrakhan-overcoated shoulder.

The fervid sunrays were pouring down over field and farm-house, and even under the wide, vine-shaded piazza, the heat was intense. And yet, in her light-green chamber, fresh from the ironing-table, and her gold-bronze hair coiled high up from her neck and forehead, Bessie Plume looked very cool, and comfortable, and decidedly pretty.

She was sitting in a little cane-seated rocking-chair, humming a tune she had heard in New York the winter before, and looking very little like a love-lorn lass as she sung and rocked and sewed, occasionally looking from her shady seat on the high piazza down on the widest stretch of pasture and woodland that lay so green and fair under the cloudless summer sky.

She was so intent on her work, or with her own sweet thoughts—*you* knew they were sweet by the quiet, happy light in her eyes—that when a carriage of the Plume market curried her mother always drove in when she carried her eggs and butter to market—rolled up to the foot of the steps, she actually sprang up in a startled amazement that instantly deepened to wonder and awe as she saw, white and still as death, somebody lying on the black seat.

"Oh, mother!"

Bessie was down the dozen steps in a second.

"I guess it's a sunstroke, dear. We found him 'longside Trout Brook, just as you see him, only a fishin'-rod in his hand. Where is Jim to carry him up to the spare room?"

"Poor fellow," Bessie said, compassionately, as she looked in on the white, handsome face with its heavy amber mustache, and sweeping, curling eyelashes.

And then, with a little cry, she sprang back as though a viper had stung her.

It was Charlewick Charlewick's father—he who had despised the "country girl" so deeply!

For a moment Bessie set her red lips tightly together; and then, when a sudden calm had come back to her eyes, she very quietly lent her aid.

That was the beginning. Charlewick Charlewick, Sr., had been fishing, and had been overpowered with the awful heat, and the result was a brain fever in the hospitable Plume farm-house, with farmer Plume to secure evening bulletins from the physician, with the farmer's wife to concoct various little tempting dishes as he convalesced, and with gazelle-footed Bessie to watch by his bedside.

He recovered under the combined influence, and—how strange a mistress Fate is!—he fell in love with Bessie Plume. He would watch her from morning till night; he would feign headaches that he might enjoy the soft cool touch of her hand as she bathed his handsome head with cool well-water; and one day, when she sat beside the lounge, where he had lain, as if asleep, for an hour, and she fanning him, he suddenly told her:

"Bessie Plume, do you know I never lived until I came to this house? and you have been my teacher of such a sweet lesson. I love you—oh! how I love you, little girl. And I am sure you care a little for me!"

He smiled because he was so sure of her. He knew he was a desirable match for any girl; he knew, so positively, he had only to "ask and it should be given."

Bessie looked up in quiet surprise.

"You must not excite yourself, Mr. Charlewick. I have Dr. Rennie's orders to keep you perfectly still."

But there was a curious gleam in her eyes as she spoke.

"I can't—I won't be quiet until I hear you say you love me. Do, little darling, bless me by your answer."

Bessie laid down the big palm-leaf fan, and looked at her suitor.

"You want my answer?"

She smiled just a little.

"How you tease me! Ask a dying man if he wants to live!"

"Then I wonder how you can think of such a thing, Mr. Charlewick. Why, it is simply preposterous. The idea of you wanting to marry a common country girl—*you*, a Charlewick!"

Bessie's voice grew harder and harder, until her concluding words were overflowing with concentrated scorn.

He stared at her, astonished.

"Don't you remember?" she asked, bitterly.

"Tuesday night, January 3d, Niblo's?"

It flashed like lightning across his memory.

"What has that to do with you?"

She drew herself up proudly.

"A great deal, since I am that same common country girl who has nursed you back to life."

Of course, Mr. Charlewick, with your keen perceptions you will readily see, and I hope candidly admit, that any one so objectionable as I for a daughter-in-law, would not for a moment be suitable for a wife. Besides, and here Bessie's voice grew careless and joyous, and her eyes radiant, as she said it, "besides, I am going to be married in a few weeks to Mr. Edgar Ornton."

After that, Mr. Charlewick recovered very fast; and by the first week of September, he went away from the farm-house and Bessie Plume.

And away down in his heart he locked the little episode, fearful but his son should know that he, too, had succumbed to the little country girl.

But he never forgot her.

The Man from Texas:

OR,

THE OUTLAWS OF ARKANSAS.

A STORY OF THE ARKANSAS BORDER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "KID DETECTIVE," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPA," "JEN OF SPADERS," "HEART OF THE WITCHES OF NEW YORK."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE "LINE FERRY."

It was on a bright and pleasant April morning that Sheriff Johnson started for the county seat of Franklin, to sell the lease of the ferry franchise across Mulberry Creek, to the highest bidder, according to the law in such cases made and provided.

Johnson was mounted on the same mettled animal which had manifested such decided aversion to Judge Yell's umbrella, as has been related; and, as on this occasion it was fresh from the stable, and naturally in high spirits, it betrayed the playful nature of its disposition by shying at every possible object along the road that it could, with any degree of reason, pretend to be afraid of.

The natural consequence was that, for the first two miles, "Mister" Johnson swore like a trooper, dug his heels into the horse's sides and jerked on the bit so vigorously, that half the time the horse was dancing along sideways like a crab, every now and then elevating its hind legs in the air in a very spiteful manner, and betraying a disposition to get rid of its rider, by rubbing him off against a convenient tree, every now and then.

Wherefore, Johnson and the horse both arrived at the county seat, sweating profusely, and each one equally disgusted with the other.

The county seat was not a particularly large place; it numbered possibly a hundred and fifty inhabitants, black and white—men, women and children all told.

The court-house was a small one-story building, elegantly painted with whitewash, and boasting a "liberty-pole" in the open space before the door.

As Johnson and the horse came dancing along into the settlement, the people generally came out to greet the sheriff; Johnson was well known.

Quite a number of men were assembled, evidently waiting for the sheriff's arrival.

Johnson dismounted and fastened the horse.

"You durned brute, I'll sell you, first thing you know if you ain't keener!" exclaimed the official, in wrath, addressing the animal.

Johnson's eyes had resumed their normal hue, and he displayed no mark of his unfortunate and sudden collision with Judge Yell's umbrella in Justice Foxcroft's court.

"What's the matter, Johnson?" exclaimed one of the bystanders; "you look riled!"

"Well, I reckon you'd look riled if you had to ride a boss that wanted to walk on his hind legs all the time," Johnson retorted, savagely.

"How's things workin' up to the landing?" asked another one of the little group.

"Bus'ness dull, an' money's scarce," answered the sheriff, laconically. "Now, gentlemen, if you'll jes' git off them yere steers, an' git in a show for my money, we'll come to bus'ness."

The loungers on the steps of the court-house

got up slowly and made way for the sheriff, who mounted the steps while the little crowd gathered round him.

Johnson drew a legal-looking document from his pocket and went ahead with the auction.

"Now, fellow-citizens, I'm going to offer at public sale, 'cording to law, the lease of the ferry privilege over Mulberry Creek, known to you all as the 'Line Ferry,' and which will be sold to the highest bidder. Now, gents, let me hear from you; how much am I offered?"

Just then a new-comer attracted the little throng and interrupted the sale.

Round the corner of the court-house, from what was known as the East Road, rode Yell Ozark, mounted on a large, gray mule, and carrying his double-barrel shot-gun across his lap, the hammers of both barrels drawn back, ready for action.

Yell approached so quietly up the road that he was upon the crowd before they knew it, and about the first intimation that Johnson had of the presence of the dreaded outlaw was seeing him halt directly in front of him, not twenty feet away.

Johnson turned pale; he held the ferry lease in his right hand and made a motion with it toward the pocket of his coat as if with intent to draw a weapon.

The crowd took in the situation at a glance, and anticipating trouble, began to edge away from the steps, so as to get out of range of the terrible "double-barrel."

Ozark's quick eyes, too, had noticed the motion, and fully understood the only half-formed purpose of the sheriff.

"How do you do, Mister Johnson?" exclaimed the ruffian, nodding to the sheriff. "I hope I see you well? I say, Johnson, you hain't got any idea of drawin' a we'pon on me, air you?"

"'Cos you ought to know that I could put a ball plum through you afore you could git any we'pon out. Have you got any fuss with me?"

"No, of course not, Mr. Ozark," replied Johnson, quickly, a long breath of relief coming from his lips and his face brightening up when he discovered that the outlaw had not sought him with hostile intent.

"I reckon that that ain't any gentleman hyer that's got any fuss with me, is that?" demanded the ruffian, looking round upon the crowd with a smile upon his sallow features. "Cos of that is, all he's got to do is to step out, draw his we'pon, an' we kin settle it now as well as any other time."

But, one and all of the crowd assured Mr. Ozark that they entertained the most friendly sentiments toward him, and, strange to relate, two-thirds of the throng assembled there before the court-house, spoke the truth. Composed as it was of "poor whites," nearly all of them looked upon Ozark as a sort of persecuted man.

"For my part, I ain't got nothin' ag'in' any one hyer," added Ozark; "I jes' rode in to town to attend this hyer auction, an' make a bid for the ferry, mebbe. Now, Mister Johnson, go ahead with your sale."

The crowd looked at one another; they began to understand why the outlaw had ridden into the county-seat that bright April morning.

Johnson repeated the announcement in regard to the sale, and again asked:

"How much do I hear for the ferry lease?"

"Two dollars!" shouted Yell, at the top of his voice, and then, quick as a flash, he snatched the double-barrelled gun up from his lap, and with his finger on the trigger, poised the barrel on his left hand.

"I bid two dollars for this yere ferry lease, an' I'd like to see the man who dares to bid ag'in' me!"

The members of the crowd around the steps, and the sheriff on the steps, looked a little uneasy at the threatening attitude of the ruffian, but, as he made no further motion, little by little their composure returned to them.

"Come, go ahead with the sale, Johnson!" Yell exclaimed; "dog-gone if I want fur to stay hyer in the hot sun all day!"

This encouraged the sheriff proceeded.

"How much am I offered—two dollars—two dollars—do I hear any more?—two dollars?"

But Johnson might have yelled two dollars until he was gray; not one of that crowd would bid the bid of Yell Ozark, backed by the awful double-barrelled shot-gun.

"Two dollars! Why, gentlemen, it's worth fifty at the least. I can't knock it down for two dollars!" Johnson said.

"Look hyer, Johnson, I don't want to have any fuss with you," Ozark remarked, quietly; "but I stand on my rights. You're to sell this hyer ferry lease to the highest bidder. I've bid two dollars, an' if that ain't anybody bids over that, 'cording to law, you've got to knock that lease down to me."

This terse and forcible argument was quite enough for Johnson; and, after a few more calls, the "Line" ferry lease was knocked down to Yell Ozark for the sum of two dollars. And that gentleman immediately resolved it to Billy Brown, who was running the ferry then, for fifty-two dollars, invited the crowd, including Sheriff Johnson, to take a drink with him, which they all did, and then rode out of town.

Johnson found himself quite an object of interest when he got back to the landing, and related the particulars of the auction.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SMITH DEFINES HIS POSITION.

About three days after the one on which the auction had taken place, General Smith and his overseer sat out on the prairie together smoking. It was twilight, and the twilight was beginning to thicken into the gloom of night.

The General had just been imparting the way his affairs stood to the overseer. The first of May was approaching very rapidly, and as yet he saw no way out of the quicksand of debt in which he was engulfed.

"I owe old Fayette about four thousand dollars, due the first of next month," he said, "and, even if he is willing to let the principal stand, I must pay the back interest, and that is a thousand dollars sure, and maybe a little over. Then, for seed, tools and supplies, I owe five hundred more. That, of course, don't press me like the other, but I ought to pay a little on it next month. I've got supplies enough to last the hands and stock till the first of August, I think; but, even if I tide over to then, I shall be floored without I can raise a little money someway."

"Get an advance on crop," suggests Texas.

"I have already had a thousand dollars," exclaimed the General, impatiently; "I ran so far behind last year that I had to get the money, even before the crop was in the ground. I tell you what it is, Mr. Texas, when a man once gets behind it's deuced hard work for him to pull up again. Nothing so hard as paying for a dead horse." The General rose and paced restlessly up and down the piazza. "If that infernal insurance company would only make some settlement on my claim, if it was only twenty-five cents on the dollar, the ready cash would pull me through!" the General exclaimed, impatiently. "If the president, or secretary, or any other official of that blamed concern would only write me a letter and say that I could have twenty-five or fifty per cent within six months or so, that would do. I could raise the money on the letter alone, but I'm ashamed to go to a friend and ask him to loan

me a thousand dollars or so, knowing that I can't give him any security whatever, and that if any thing happens to me, he would never get a cent from my estate."

"But, haven't you heard any thing from the insurance company lately?" Texas asked.

"Not a word since I came back. I saw the agent in Little Rock, and he assured me that the affairs of the company were not near so bad as had been represented, and that he felt sure a dividend would be declared very soon. Some law case, involving a very heavy sum, had been decided in favor of the company, and the assets had turned out much better than had been expected. He told me he would see that I had a full explanation of just how affairs stood from the receiver in charge of the thing as soon as he got back to Memphis; but, as yet, I haven't heard a word. I'm going into town to-night; I had a message from old Fayette, this afternoon, that he would like to see me this evening if I could make it convenient to come. I suppose he wants to talk the matter over and see what I propose to do in the premises."

"Going in right away?"

"Yes, Sam is saddling my horse now," the General replied. "If you have nothing better to do, ride in with me."

"I should really like to, General," the overseer answered, "but the darkies haven't got back with that load of corn yet, and I think I had better attend to that being put in the store-house myself."

"Yes, yes, of course," the General said, quickly. "Mr. Texas, it gives me great pleasure, sir, to state to you that I am more than satisfied with your management since you have been on my place. As you honestly said, you were a little green about the duties of an overseer; but you were willing to work and quick to learn, and you got more work out of the negroes than any other man I have ever seen. You have good ideas about improving things, too. If I had had you to advise me to put a few acres in corn last year, as you have done this spring, I should have been a great deal better off. I think your argument is sound. We Southern planters trust too much to cotton, so that when we have a bad year we have nothing to fall back on."

"I'm much obliged for the compliment, General," the overseer said, his face flushing up a little. "I've tried to do my best, and as for the darkies, I merely keep 'em to their work, that's all."

"You have an excellent, systematic way with you; that accounts for it. By the way, Mr. Texas," said the General, very abruptly, "excuse the question, but haven't you served in the army?"

"Why should you think that, General?" asked the overseer, quietly, and with no trace of embarrassment in his manner.

"Well, I fancied I detected a sort of military way with you. I noticed, too, that you have a habit of detailing the hands in squads. I thought, perhaps, that you had served during the late war."

"You're wrong there, General; I had nothing to do with the war. I never lifted a finger on either side," the overseer replied.

"Probably a fancy, but I would have bet almost any thing, sir, that you had served."

Just then Sam's appearance with the General's horse put a stop to the conversation, and mounting, Smith set out for town.

"Those fellows got back with the wagon yet?" Texas asked, after the General had ridden off.

"No, sir," Sam replied.

"What the deuce can keep them?" the overseer exclaimed.

"I dunno so, sir," Sam said, doubtfully, scratching his head in deep thought; "I spects, dough, Massa Texas, dat dem brack rascals has done made beasts of demselves wid bad whiskey down to de landin'."

"That's very likely; you had better saddle up a horse and ride into town and see what has become of them."

"Yes, sir, I'll done fetch 'em!"

In five minutes Sam was in the saddle and off.

The overseer lit a fresh cigar and listened until the sound of the horse's hoofs ceased in the distance.

"That box bothers me," his thoughts ran on, as he tilted his chair back on its hind legs and puffed a huge volume of smoke into the air. There's only one person in this world besides myself who could possibly have any motive to get possession of the paper in the box, and that is the man who murdered my father, and whose name is scratched in strokes of blood across the back of the paper. But, how could that person possibly learn of the existence of the box, and the terrible evidences that it contained? That is a mystery. The old negro evidently knew nothing of the contents of the box; and it had not been, apparently, disturbed in its hiding-place since it had been placed there. Can it be that the whole story of the negro, Jupiter, is but fiction, and that the paper he described never had an existence except in his imagination?" This was a new view of the case, one that had never occurred to the mind of the overseer before. But, after a few minutes' reflection he saw that there were strong points against it.

"That can not be the truth," he mused. "What object could the negro gain by coining such a story? The watch and ring were my father's, I am sure; I've seen them a thousand times. Then, too, the moment I got hold of the paper I should have known whether it was my father's handwriting or a forgery. That my father is dead is almost a certainty, for he has never been seen since sixty-three, and, if he is in the world, I surely would have heard from or of him in all these years, for he was well aware of my address at San Antonio. It settles right down to this: first and foremost, the story of the yellow boy, Jupiter, is true; my father was murdered, and in this neighborhood; and before he died Jupiter found him, and my father, with his quill tooth-pick, wrote the name of his murderer on the back of some legal paper that he happened to have in his possession, and that he used the blood coming from his death-wound for ink; true, too, that the mulatto buried the body and hid the paper in the tobacco-box, and then concealed it in the old cabin, from which it has been stolen by some one. Only one person has any reason to wish to get possession of that paper. Ergo, then, if I discovered the person who took the paper from the tin-box, I shall, at the same time, discover the man who murdered my father. There, I think I have reduced that down pretty clean."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE HEART OF A PRINCESS.

He had hardly finished his train of cogitation and mental comment, when he heard the rustle of a woman's dress, and turning his head, he beheld Missouri advancing along the piazza from the doorway.

The girl had cast a veil over her head, half concealing the long curls that floated down her back nearly to her waist.

Pretty Missouri had magnificent hair.

The overseer rose from his seat.

"Isn't my father here?" she asked.

"No, Miss," Texas replied; "he went into town, only a little while ago."

"What a beautiful night it is!" Missouri murmured, half to herself, gazing up at the starry heavens above.

"Won't you sit down, Miss?" Texas said, respectfully, placing a chair for the girl as he spoke.

"Thank you," she said, very sweetly, accepting the proffered seat. "Are you learned in star-gazing, Mr. Texas?"

"A little," he responded. He had made a movement as if to retreat from the piazza, but the question restrained him.

"Yes, Miss, a little," he repeated.

"Come and point out the Pleiades to me."

The overseer approached, and as he did so, cast away the cigar which he held in his hand, though it was not a quarter consumed.

The girl noticed the action in surprise.

"You have thrown away your cigar," she said.

"Certainly, when a lady is present."

"On my account?"

"I shall either have to say that it was, or tell you a story," he replied, bluntly.

Missouri looked at the overseer with considerable astonishment manifested in her face at the frank confession, and Texas added: "I don't pretend to be much of a gentleman, but I was brought up not to smoke in the presence of ladies."

This strange-talking young overseer was a complete puzzle to the haughty young Southern girl. At one moment he used as coarse and rough expressions as any rude frontiersman on the border, and the next gave utterance to sentiments that should only come from a gentleman by birth and breeding.

house with the air of an Eastern queen, but, truth compels the statement, that she immediately went up to her room, and flinging herself on her bed, began to cry like a child.

"Smith isn't a very royal name, but that girl has got the heart of a princess in her body," the overseer said.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 181.)

The Specter Barque.

A TALE OF THE PACIFIC.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID,
AUTHOR OF "TRACKED TO DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXXIX. A SAIL!

THERE has been a long interregnum of silence, no one having spoken on any subject, most knowing that the minds of all are upon this. Padillo, deeming the time has arrived, breaks the silence by branching it.

"Amigos!" he says, an odd appellation considering the proposal he is about to make, "since there's no food to be found, it's clear we've die of starvation; though if we could only hold out a little longer, something might turn up to save us. For myself, I don't yet despair but that some coasting-craft may come along; or they may see us from the shore. It's only a question of time and keeping alive. How are we to do that?"

"Ay—how?" asks Velarde, as if secretly prompted to put the question.

"Well," answers Padillo, "there's a way, and only one that I can think of; there's no need for all of us to die—not yet. Some one ought, and must, so that the others may have a chance to be saved. Are you agreed to that?"

The interrogatory does not need to be more explicitly put; it is understood by all, and several give assent, either tacitly or in brief monosyllabic speech. A few make no sign one way or the other. They are too feeble and far gone to care what may become of them.

"What would you propose, Padillo?"

It is again Velarde who interrogates.

Padillo makes reply, first turning his eyes toward the grotto in which the girls have taken refuge from the hot rays of the meridian sun.

"Camaradas! I don't see why we men should suffer death by starvation, while women—"

Harry Blew does not permit him to finish the speech. Catching its significance, he cries: "Avast, there!—not another word of that. If any of us has got to die, and be eaten, it must be a man. As for the women, they go last, not first. At all events, they don't go before me. I'll die before they do, and so will somebody else."

Striker and Davis indorse the determination; Hernandez feebly, but Gomez in protestation strong as that of Blew himself.

In De Lara there still lives a sentiment which makes the proposal of Padillo seem something more than horrible. It is the first time he and Harry Blew are in accord, and being so, there is no uncertainty about the decision to be arrived at. It is at once tacitly understood, and only waits for one to declare it.

Striker does this, saying:

"Though I've been a convict, and don't deny it, I ain't a coward, nor no way afeerd to kick up my heels whenever my time comes. If that bes now, and Jack Striker's got to die, dash it, he's ready; but it must be a fair and square thing. Therefore let it be settled by our castin' lots all round."

"I agree to that," growls Padillo, "if you mean it to include the women as well."

"We don't mean any thing of the sort," says Blew, springing to his feet. "Ye unmanly scoundrel!" he continues, approaching Padillo, "repeat your dastardly proposal, and there'll be no need for drawin' cuts. In a minute more either you or me'll make food for anybody as likes to eat us. Now!"

The Californian, who has still preserved much of his tenacious strength, and all his ruffian ferocity, nevertheless shrinks and cowers before the stalwart sailor.

"Carajo!" he exclaims, doggedly and reluctantly submitting. "Be it as you like. I don't care any more than the rest of you when it comes to facing fate. Rafael Rocas isn't the man to show the white feather. I only propose what I believe to be fair. In a matter of life and death, I don't see why women are any better than men; but if you all think different, then do as you say, and let us cast the lots leaving them out."

Padillo's submissive speech puts an end to the strange debate. The side issue is decided against him, and the main question again comes up.

After a time it too is determined. Hunger demands a victim. To appease it one must die. The horrible resolve reached, it remains to fix on the mode of selection. No great difficulty is there in this. It is got over by Striker saying: "Chums! there's just twelve of us, the even dozen. Let's take twelve o' these little shells ye see scattered about, and put 'em into the ship's pannikin; one o' them we can mark. Him as draws the marked one, must do—I needn't tell you what."

"Die" would have been the word, as all understood without having it spoken.

The plan is acceptable, and accepted. There seems no fairer for obtaining the fiat of Fate on the dread question. The shells lie thickly strewn over the ground. There are thousands, all of the same shape and size. By touch or feel it would be impossible to tell one from another; nor yet by color, since all are snow-white. Twelve of them are taken up and put into the tin cup, a quart measure—one being first marked by a spot of red. It is blood drawn from Striker's own arm, which he has punctured for the purpose. Soon absorbed by the porous substance of the shell, it can not possibly be detected by the touch. The preliminaries completed, all gather round, ready to draw. They wait for him who keeps watch by the spread tarpaulin. He must take his chance with the rest in this lottery of life or death. It is the Dutchman who is on duty above. They have already hailed him, and commanded him to come down, proclaiming their purpose. He neither obeys nor gives back response. He does not look in their direction! They can see him by the signal-staff standing erect with his face turned toward the sea. He has a hand raised shading his eyes from the sun. He appears to be regarding some object in the offing.

Presently he lowers the spread palm, then raises a telescope that sparkles in the sun.

They stand speechless with bated breaths, their dark purpose for the time suspended, for on the gleaming of that glass they have a fancy there may be hope as there is light.

There is silence till the telescope goes down. Then a shout that sends the blood in quick current through their veins, bringing back hope to their hearts.

"A sail!"

CHAPTER LXXX.

CAN IT BE THE CONDOR?

"A sail!"

Two little words, but to men situated as they,

full of big meaning—oft carrying the question of life or death.

To their ears sweet as music, despite the Teutonic sibilant of him who gave them utterance. Down drops the pannikin, spilling and scattering the shells. There is hope they may no more need them.

At the shout all have faced toward the sea, and stand scanning its surface. But with gaze unrewarded. The white flecks gleaming afar, are but the wings of gulls.

"Where away?" shouts one, interrogating him on the hill.

"South-westward they can not see. In this direction their view is cut off by the precipice, interposed between them and the outside shore. All that are able start to ascend the cliff. The stronger ones rush up the gorge, as if their lives depended on speed. The weaker ones go toiling after. One or two, weaker still, slay waiting below.

The first up on clearing the scarp get their eyes upon the Dutchman. His behavior might cause them surprise if they could not account for it. The beacon is upon the summit of a hill two hundred yards beyond. He is beside it, and apparently beside himself. Dancing over the ground, tossing his arms about, and waving his hat overhead. All the while he shouts as to some ship close at hand, hailing, "Alloy! alloy!"

Looking they can see none, and for a moment think him mad, and fear it may be all a mistake. For there is no ship near enough to be hailed.

But sending their gaze further out there gives place to joy; for certainly there is a ship, a mere speck on the horizon. But seeming big through the telescope, the sight has frenzied the sailor, till he fancies those aboard may hear his hail, or see his gesticulations.

Foolish, as the others can perceive; but without staying to reflect, they strain on toward the summit where the signal has been erected.

Harry Blew is the first to reach it, and clutching the telescope drags it from the hands of the half-crazed Dutchman.

Bringing it to his eye he bends it on the distant sail, and there keeps it more than a minute. Meanwhile, the others have come up, and clustering around impatiently question him.

"What is she? How's she standing?"

"A bit of a barque," responds Blew. "And from what I can make out, coming along the coast. I'll be better able to tell you when she draws out from the clump o' cloud."

Gomez, standing by, appears eager to get hold of the glass, while Blew seems equally reluctant to give it up. Still holding it to his eye he says:

"See to that signal, mates! Spread the tarpaulin to its full stretch, and face it square so's to give 'em the best chance o' sightin' it."

Striker and Davis spring to the piece of tarred canvas, and one at each corner draw out creases and hold it as directed.

All the while Blew stands with the telescope to his eye, loth to relinquish it.

But Gomez, grown impatient, insists on having his turn, and it is at length surrendered to him.

Blew, slipping aside, seems excited with some emotion he tries to conceal. Striking it must be, judging from its effects. His face shows an expression difficult to describe, surprise that amounts to amazement, joy mingled with fear, or more like anxiety.

Soon as yielding to Gomez the glass, he pulls off his pilot-coat, then divesting himself of his shirt—a scarlet flannel—he suspends it from the outer end of the cross-piece supporting the tarpaulin. As he does so, saying to Striker and Davis:

"That's a signal no ship ought to disregard, an' won't it be manned by Christian men. She won't if she sees it. You two stay here, an' keep the things well spread. I'm goin' below to say a word to the poor creturs; stand by the signal and don't let 'em haul it down."

"Ay, ay!" answers Striker, without comprehending, and somewhat wondering at the direction—under the circumstances, strange. "All right, Blew. Ye may depend on me an' Bill."

"I know it—I do," rejoins the ex-man-o'-war's-man, again drawing the dreadnought over his shiffling skin. "Both of you be true to me, an' before long I may be able to do something to show that I ain't ungrateful."

Saying this he separates from the "Sydney ducks," going down toward the gorge.

Both as they stand by the signal staff wonder at his words, and interrogate one another as to what may be their meaning.

In the midst of their mutual questioning they are attracted by a cry strangely intoned. It is from Gomez, who has brought down the telescope, and holds it in trembling hand.

"What is it?" asks Padillo, stepping up beside him.

"Take the glass, see for yourself!"

The contraband does as directed.

He is silent for some seconds while leveling the telescope on the strange vessel. Soon as he has her within the field of view, he commences making remarks, overheard by Striker and Davis, giving both a surprise—the latter least.

"Barque she is—polacca masts. Carramba! that's queer, about the same bulk too. If it wasn't that we're sure of the other being below, I'd be willing to swear it was she; of course it can only be a coincidence. *Santisima!* a strange one!"

Velarde in turn takes the telescope, he too after a sight through it, expressing himself in a similar manner. Hernandez next: for the four Spaniards have all ascended to the hill.

But Striker does not wait to hear what Hernandez may have to say. Dropping the tarpaulin he strides up to him, and *sans ceremonie*, jerks the telescope from his fingers.

Then bringing it up to his eye sights for himself.

Less than twenty seconds sufficed for him to determine the character of the vessel. Within that time his glance settling upon her hull, traversing along the line of her bulwarks, and then descending to the top of her masts, recognizes them all, as things with which he is well acquainted.

He too almost lets fall the telescope, and turning to the others, he says, in scared voice: "It's the Condor!"

CHAPTER LXXXI.

THE AVENGING NECESSITY.

"The Condor?"

"Cospita! it can not be."

"Mil demonios, no!"

"Carajo!"

Thus the four Spaniards respond to Striker's announcement.

"But it be her, for all that. It's the Chilian barque to a surety. Her or the ghost o' her."

The speech intensifies strange thoughts already in their minds. How could it be the Condor? Ten days ago scuttled, sent to the bottom of the sea. She can not be sailing there. Impossible! The thing seem must be a specter!

In their weak state, with nerves unnaturally excited, they almost believe this. At least enough to impress one and all with a wild,

weird fancy, striking terror to their guilty souls.

What can they think? What other could they, than that something not mortal is pursuing them? The Hand of God is against them. They know it by experience of the past ten days. And now in the strange vessel, standing along the coast, whether specter or not, they can see that Hand stretching further and coming nearer and nearer.

Clearly it is Fate—surely the avenging Nemesis!

"The barque, without a doubt!" continues Striker, with the glass again to his eye. "Every thing the same 'cep'in' the sails, some of which show patched-like. That be nothin'. It's the Chilian craft an' no other. You see the ensign w' the one star trailin' over her taffrail. The Condor, sure's we stan' here!"

"Carrai!" exclaims Gomez. "Where are they who took charge of the scuttling? Did they do it?"

Remembering them, they all turn round, looking for them among the group gathered around the staff; they are not seen. Blew has long ago gone down the gorge, and Davis is just disappearing into it. They shout to him to come back. He hears, but not heeding them, continues on, and is soon out of sight. It matters not much questioning him, and they give up thought of it. The sail out at sea engrosses their attention, again recalled to it.

Now nearer, the telescope is no longer needed to tell that it is polacca-masted; with all other points proclaiming it the Condor. Size, shape of hull, sit in the water, every thing the same, and the bit of hunting the peak a Chilian ensign. Yes, it is the Condor's flag. They remember a damaged point on the star.

It is there. Beyond doubt the barque, the abandoned!

Standing toward them, straight toward them—coming on at a rate of speed that has already brought her abreast the islet in a time almost incredible. She has all sail set, with a strong breeze abeam. She has seen their signal—no doubt of that. If there were, it is soon set at rest. For, as they stand watching her, she comes opposite the opening in the reef; then she stops, and the bit of hunting the peak is squared, and she is instantly howling.

Down goes a boat from the davits; as it strikes the water, men swarming over the side and dropping into her. Then the splash of oars, their wet blades glinting in the sun.

It is rowed through the reef passage, impelled by strong arms, soon crosses the stretch of calm water, and shoots up into the cove.

Beaching, its crew springs out upon the pebbly strand—some not waiting till it is drawn up, but dashing breast deep into the water.

There are nearly twenty, all stalwart men, with big heads, some in sailor garb, but some red-shirted, belted, bristling with bowie-knives and pistols. Tall boots, the tops below the knees, with trousers tucked in. In short, the costume of the California gold-digger.

Two are different from the rest—in the uniform of naval officers, with caps gold-banded. These, though the youngest, seem to command the others—to lead them, too; being the first to leap out of the boat. And soon as on shore drawing swords and advancing at their head.

All this observed by those on the hill standing by the staff, as if, like it, fixed. But not as motionless, for all are trembling with—

With stark terror.

Hitherto partaking of the supernatural, it is no less strange now. At least not that of Gomez and Hernandez—Francisco De Lara and Faustino Calderon. Strange to see the Condor afloat—stranger still, far more unaccountable, to behold among the men who have come out her two well known to them, and as heartily hated. For in the officers leading the diggers they recognize their old rivals, Crozier and Cadwallader.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

A CHANCE YET.

THE four Spaniards are alone upon the summit of the hill, Striker, Davis and the others having gone down the cliff. They stand close to the tarpaulin signal, still spread. Face to face in quartette, as if about to commence a quadrille, but with an expression very different from that of dancers. Instead of delight, their countenances show the extreme of wretched desperation. Vividly they recall their crime, now that its punishment seems near. Can aught avail them to avert it? No, they think neither of escape nor resistance. Both would be idle, the last only hastening the dread end—death. They stay by the signal, scared and cowering.

One of the four—it is De Lara—in sullen silence, and with eyes dilated. He has watched the beaching of the boat and the debarking of his crew. Recognizing the officers, he clutches Calderon by the arm, exclaiming:

"Great God! Faustino! see *guardia marina*!"

"Por Cristo! Yes," is the rejoinder; "mystery of mysteries, what can it mean?"

To this De Lara makes no reply till some time after. Then, thus:

"No mystery; none whatever. I see it all now, clear as daylight. Blew has been traitor to us, as I suspected all along. He and Davis have not scuttled the barque, but left her to go drifting about. The frigate to which the officers belong has come across, picked her up, and lo! there they are."

"Canal!" exclaims Calderon. "It is as you say, no doubt. But these rough fellows. They're not man-o'-war-men, nor sailors of any sort. They appear to be gold-diggers, the same as we saw in San Francisco. Where can they be from?"

"Impossible to say. It matters not what they are, or where from. Enough that they're here, and we in their power."

"Mil demonios! What do you suppose they'll do to us? Do you think they'll shoot or hang us?"

"What an idle question. I don't think any thing about it. One or the other they'll be sure to do."

"Santisima! there's no chance of our escaping!"

"None whatever. No use our trying to get away from them. There's nowhere we could conceal ourselves; not a spot to give us shelter for a single hour. For my part, I don't intend to stir from here. Yes; I shall go down to them and meet death like a man. No, like a tiger. Before dying I shall kill. Say, are you good to do the same? Are you game for it?"

The interrogatory is to Calderon alone. The other two have stepped to the cliff edge, and are looking below, seemingly engaged in an earnest dialogue.

"I don't comprehend you," answers Calderon. "Kill what, or who?"

"Whomsoever I can. Two for certain."

"Which two?"

"Crozier and Carmen. You may do as you please. I've marked out my pair, and mean to have their lives before surrendering my own. Hark, if I can't hit. She shan't stay behind to triumph over my fall. No, by the Almighty!"

While speaking, the desperado has taken out his revolver, holding it at half-cock, spins the cylinder round to see that all six chambers are loaded.

Sure of this, he returns it to his holster, and glances at the *machete* on his left side.

All this with a cool carelessness that shows he intends to carry through his hellish purpose. Calderon, quailing at the thought of it, endeavors to dissuade him. He believes there is still a chance to escape death, and that their punishment will be only imprisonment.

He is urging this on De Lara, when the latter cuts him short.

"You can rot in a prison if it so please you. After what's happened, that's not the destiny for me. I prefer death and vengeance."

"Better life and vengeance," cries Rocas, coming up, Lozada along with him, both seemingly in anxious haste.

"Quick, comrades!" he continues, "follow me. I'll find a way to save the first, and maybe get the last, sooner than you expected."

"It's no use, Rafael, our attempting to run away. They'll only shoot us down all the more certain. Where could we run to?"

"Come on! I'll show you where. *Carajo*. Don't stand hesitating. Every second counts now. If we can but get there in time."

"Get where?"

"At *bata*."

At the words, De Lara utters an exclamation of joy. They apprise him of a scheme which, if successful, will not only save his life, but give him a revenge sweet as ever fell to the lot of mortal man.

He hesitates no longer, but hastens after the seal-hunter, who, with Calderon and Lozada, has already started toward the cliff.

Soon they are descending it, not by the gorge through which they came up, but another that leads down to a different cove.

Little dream Crozier and Cadwallader, or the men who have landed along with them, of the danger impending. If the scheme of the seal-hunter succeed, theirs will be a fearful fate. The tables will be turned upon them!

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE ARRESTED STROKE.

LEAVING their boat behind with the coxswain to take care of it, the rescuers advance toward the inner end of the cove.

At first with caution; till passing the rock point, they see what is before them. Then the young officers rush forward, with no fear of having to fight. No longer a thought of it. Instead of armed men to meet them, they behold dear ones from whom they have been so long separated—their betrothed sweethearts. Beside them Harry Blew!

With swords sheathed, and pistols returned to their holsters, they hasten on, the girls advancing to meet them.

Soon they come together, two and two, breasts touching, and arms enfolded in mutual embrace.

For a while no words; the hearts of all four too full for speech. Only ejaculations of joy, kisses, tears. Then questions, explanations, those necessarily brief and abrupt. The first from Crozier, telling Carmen her father still lives; that he is aboard the barque, forbidden by them to take part in their expedition ashore, till they can report to him the result. He lives—he is well—that is enough. Then a word or two epitomizing past occurrences, succeeded by interrogatories from Crozier about the present—the situation as it is.

For answers to them he turns to Harry Blew; all the while standing by in silent expectation.

Neither by word or gesture has the sailor yet saluted his patron and preserver. Is it from delicacy to intrude in that sacred hour, or the dread of the self-condemned criminal?

In quick retrospect of all that has passed, of all he has heard, Crozier concludes it to be the latter. How could he otherwise? Withal, he will wait the explanation; and, stepping up to the ex-man-o'-war's man, he demands it in a stern voice, saying:

"Now, sir, I desire an account from you. Tell your story straight, and don't conceal or prevaricate. If your treason be as black as I believe it, you deserve no mercy from me. And your only chance to obtain it will be by telling the whole truth."

While speaking, the officer has drawn his sword, and stands facing the sailor, as if a word might be the signal for thrusting him through.

Blew is himself armed with both pistol and knife. But instead of showing sign to draw either, or making any defense, he stands cowering, his head drooping down on his breast.

No response. Only his broad chest heaving and falling, as if stirred by some terrible emotion.

His silence seems a confession of guilt. Taking, or mistaking, it for such, Crozier cries out:

"Traitor! confess, before I cut you down, or run this blade through your body."

"You may kill me if you wish, Master Edward. By rights my life belongs to ye. But if ye take it now I'll have the satisfaction o' knowin' I've done the best I could to prove my gratitude for your once savin'."

Long before the end of this speech the threatening stroke is stayed, the raised blade dropped, point downward. On the hand grasping it a gentle one is laid—a soft voice saying:

"Stay, Edward! *Dios de mi alma!* What would you do? You know not. Listen! This brave man. To him we owe our lives—everything."

"Yes," adds Inez, advancing. "It is he who has protected us."

Crozier stands trembling, the sword almost shivering from his grasp.

While shivering, it is the reflection crosses his mind, how near he has been to doing a deed that would ever after have made him a miserable man.

He feels like one restrained from a paralytic act—almost from suicide.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 172.)

Saved by Stratagem.

BY WALTER A. ROSE.

THE *Idalia*'s sails were spread to woo the soft summer wind that scarce caused them to flap as she floated, driven more by the tide than the tremulous breeze, down the tawny bow of the Yang-tze-Kiang. She reached Woosung and anchored for awhile in order to allow the tide to make—the high flood tide which would carry her in safety over the treacherous ridge of sand that stretches across the entrance to Woosung. As the tide rose, the vacillating wind, concluding vagary of the south-west monsoon, shifted a fresh breeze filled the snow-white sails of the lively craft, and she sped merrily over the laughing waves of the sapphire sea as the golden sun sank down in a flood of crimson and amber that tinted the jagged peaks of Saddle Island with roseate hues and glinted mellow upon the light wisps of cloud that floated across the azure empyrean.

The *Idalia* was a fine brigantine of 250 tons, with taut, raking spars, beautiful lines, and a general symmetry that caused her to be regarded by seamen as an A No. 1 wave-skimmer.

Upon the voyage in question she was bound from Shanghai to New York, and was under the command of Captain Barnum, a sharp-

visaged, shrewd New Englander, one slightly fond of driving a hard bargain, but withal a true-hearted man, brave as the typical lion, though stubborn as the traditional mule.

The *Idalia* was tea-laden and consequently "flying light." Her crew consisted of the skipper, the chief officer—who is the reader's humble servant—Mr. Seaton, the second mate, a cook and steward combined, and eight able seamen. It was not customary for the *Idalia* to carry passengers, but our skipper had been persuaded by the consignee of the vessel, Shanghai to do so in order to accommodate the widow and children of the captain of an American vessel which had been lately wrecked on the Korean coast. It was the barque Bodacca which had been driven upon that rock-bound and inhospitable shore, and Captain West, her skipper, had lost his life by the sudden dissolution of the vessel, which he had refused to leave until every other member of the crew had landed in safety.

Mrs. West was a cheery, good-tempered lady from the Green Mountains of Vermont, and she was accompanied by her son and daughter. Ella West was eight years the senior of her brother, nearly nineteen summers having already glided over her fair head. She was a beautiful girl, tall in stature yet exquisitely formed, and graceful as a fawn in every movement. She had eyes dark as night, yet bright as morning stars, very regular features, a charming little mouth, a complexion that Psyche herself would have envied, so delicately were the hues of the rose and the languid whiteness of the lily blended, and a voice that was sweet and melodious as the cadence of a siren's song. Her brother Fred was a merry, mischievous lad, who already aspired to follow in his father's footsteps and seek his fortune upon the sea, though it had proved his parent's grave.

Before the brig had put many leagues of distance between the Saddles and herself, the fickle wind again deserted her, and for many days she did not progress a mile, but lay

your mother and Fred and come with me, quick," I said.

The fair girl laid her delicate hand upon my arm and raised her beautiful eyes, while her loosened locks glistened in the dim light of the cabin lamp. "I am not afraid, Mr. Phelps; but if they fire the vessel, will you save poor mamma?" she murmured.

"While I have life you may depend upon my defending you all from peril to the best of my ability," I replied.

She thanked me with her eloquent eyes and ran down into the cabin. The next moment she re-appeared with Mrs. West and Fred, who was still half-asleep. When we gained the deck the lad realized the situation at a glance. "I'm going to leave the men a hand; you look after mamma and sis," whispered this juvenile Bayard, as he slipped away across the deck.

I had not fully determined where to store the ladies, but when we got to the break of the fore-castle it suddenly occurred to me that the "bo'sen's locker," where all the spare blocks and such gear was kept, would be as safe a place as could be found. The door was fastened with a heavy iron bar and padlock, the key of which was in my pocket. I soon opened it, but had to roll a barrel of tar and before my charges could enter the locker was very much frightened and clung to Ella, who was calm and composed though ghastly pale.

"Where is Freddy? where is my dear boy?" cried the poor, terror-stricken matron, as I was about to close the door. "Do, please, bring my son!"

I could not refuse the maternal pleading, though, knowing the boy's nature, I thought it would be a difficult task to induce him to submit to confinement at such a time. However, a bright thought flashed across my mind as I ran to where the youngster was standing. "Fred, I want you to help me—quick! Go to the pantry and get all the bottles and glass things you can find, put them into the dog-basket—never mind smashing them—and bring them forward on the port-side," I said.

"Ay, ay, sir!" responded the lad, pleased to be given an order.

I went forward again, started the bung of the tar-cask I had rolled out of the locker, and let the contents run out upon the deck. I was just preparing to empty in like manner a cask of copal varnish, which was lashed under the fore-castle when Fred came along with the basket. "What are you doing, Mr. Phelps?" he asked.

"Never you mind. Take a belaying-pin—an iron one is in the rail there—smash that glass up and toss the pieces loose around in the stuff," I replied.

Fred guessed my meaning and obeyed with alacrity. Just before he had cut off all access to the locker, I caught him up and tossed him gently inside. "There's Fred, Mrs. West. Don't make any noise—Good-night, Ella," I said.

A faint benison came out of the darkness as I hurriedly barred the door; then I took a hand-spike, stirred the pieces of glass about in the tenacious fluid, until I felt sure no shoeless savage could approach the locker, and went aft to my comrades. I had just time to grasp a cutlass before the piratical craft ran right alongside the brig. Our skipper and those men who had firearms began blazing away at the dusky devils on the junk, who, though their vessel carried heavy guns, did not use them, as they probably deemed that our capture could be easily effected without them, and their booming might attract the attention of any gun-boat that might possibly be cruising in the vicinity; but as soon as the gunwales touched, the Chinese swarmed pell-mell over the Idalia's rail, and a terrific hand-to-hand combat ensued.

We kept well together, and fought as only men can fight who know that they must win or die—with that reckless, impetuous, insane desperation which springs spontaneously in the breast of even the most timorous when odds are adverse, life the guerdon of victory, death the penalty of defeat. Uttering most fearful yells and demoniac war-cries, the savage hordes pressed upon our decks, and though many of the ruthless miscreants fell, with cloven skulls and shattered limbs beneath the sturdy blows rained upon them by our little band, they did not halt or waver, or swerve from their deadly purpose, but rushed headlong in a multitude upon us, scattering, wounding, slaying, and blood-dripping through until my senses reeled, my brain was ablaze, and I saw nothing, knew nothing, felt nothing until a sudden chilliness overspread me, and a feeling of suffocation told me I had been hurled into the sea.

The cool water revived me, and I struck upward until I reached the surface. Swimming with difficulty, for I wore heavy "sea-boots," to the bow of the brig, I grasped the end of a fib-downhaul that was trailing overboard, and climbed upon the martingale backstays, where I knew I could not be seen from the sub-deck. The uproar above had been subsiding, and I concluded that all my brave comrades having been slain the pirates were busily engaged in their work of pillage. I listened attentively with a terrible sickening anxiety at my heart, a fearful dread that they would discover the hiding-place of the ladies, and that I should be powerless to save the girl whom I had learned to love from the fearful fate that would await her. I knew the devilish ingenuity of the Chinese, and I was in agony at the thought that, finding themselves unable to approach the locker on account of the glass, they would put planks down and so neutralize the effect of my stratagem.

Presently the jabbering and wrangling aboard became more distinct, and I knew that the marauders were coming forward. My breast beat wildly; I drew myself up close to the hawse-pipe, through which I could see all that went on aboard. In the silvery light of the moon which shone occasionally from the fleecy clouds that veiled the sky, I saw several pirates advance swiftly. In an instant the air was resonant with cries and shrieks and frightful imprecations as their naked feet were planted upon the sharp pieces of glass which the tar and varnish had almost immovable. They stumbled and fell, and in their fall wounded themselves still more severely; they writhed and twisted, howling, cursing and groaning—they were fairly trapped, and I could have laughed in glee at their discomfort had not my anxiety for poor Mrs. West and her children reigned supreme over all other feelings, and the cries of their comrades, other of the plunderers came forward, and with the aid of ropes extricated the wounded men, whose injuries were evidently so painful and severe as to deter the others from prosecuting the raid upon the fore-castle lockers any further.

A light breeze was springing up, and I could tell by the cries aboard that the pirates were

preparing to quit the brig. The junk was already hauling off when I heard a voice, which was evidently that of the chief, as it had rung high above all others during the din and turmoil of the conflict aboard the Idalia, give an order of which I was only able to comprehend one word, and that was "Fou."

"Fire! only a word, yet it spoke volumes to me—my worst fears were about to be realized, the vessel was to be burned. I knew that the friendly tar would now be a deadly enemy, for, once ablaze, to rescue the widow and her children from the locker would be a matter of sheer impossibility. I saw a torch hurled aboard; it fell amidships, alighting on a dry sail which instantly caught fire, the bright yellow flames shooting grandly up and enveloping the galley. Then the pirates evidently thought their work of devastation completed, for their vessel's helm was put up, her sails fitted to the breeze, and I could hear the foam dashing before her bows ere I sprang on deck. The house in which the sailors lived and which was contiguous to the galley was already in flames, and I knew I must quickly free the ladies and get them aft before the tar caught. I did not mind the broken glass, for my heavy-soled boots protected my feet from laceration, but I threw a couple of planks down and opened the door of the locker with the utmost expedition.

"I must carry you aft at once, the vessel is afire amidships, but the pirates have gone," I said, as I hurriedly caught up Mrs. West. "Fred, follow me along the planks—Miss Ella, I will return for you in a moment," I added.

The widow was no feather weight, and she was terribly frightened, but the passage along the port side was clear and I ran aft with my load and unceremoniously deposited it at the foot of the poop ladder. As I ran back I met Fred.

"Cut the gripes of the quarter-boat and see the tackle-falls all clear for lowering," I cried, as we passed each other.

By the time I reached the locker the brig, having no one at her helm, had fallen off before the wind, and ere I issued from under the break of the fore-castle with pretty Ella recumbent on my arms, the flames were sweeping clear athwart the deck. I hesitated a moment, it seemed so terrible to rush through that crimson and yellow volume of fire. For myself I cared little, for the peril my beautiful burden would encounter I had an agonizing fear. My heart failed me; I could not risk rushing into what seemed certain death with one I loved so well. I felt the dear girl shudder as a cloud of smoke swept up and environed us; I hesitated no longer.

"Be brave, my darling. I will save you—but not through that," I murmured, as I ascended the fore-castle ladder.

She clung to me closer, and nestled her fair head upon my breast, as though to shut out from sight the deadly tower of flame that was rapidly advancing toward us. One second only I paused, but in that brief space I pressed my lips upon the downy cheek of the young girl. The kiss that I culled gave me new strength, new energy, fresh courage, and I sprang at once over the side of the brig into the rippling sea.

We did not sink far beneath the surface, and as soon as we gained it I gently raised Ella's head upon my shoulder and swam toward the brig's quarter, shouting loudly meanwhile to Fred to leave the junk a zone. The lurid glow of the sky-souring flames enabled him to perceive us, and he dropped a stout line, with a life-buoy attached, into my hand. Ella was brave as Semiramis, she even smiled upon me as I passed the clumsy ring of convulsed cork over her pretty sea-soaked tresses.

"Float here until we lower the boat," I said, again kissing her.

That young imp, Fred, actually laughed aloud as I hauled myself upon deck by the rope. "Queer time for love-making, isn't it?" he said, lightly.

I did not heed him, but lifted Mrs. West into the boat and bade the boy lower away at his end. "Slide down the fall, Fred," I said, as the boat touched the water.

He obeyed me, and had the after-block unhooked as soon as I had the bow one. In another instant I drew Ella out of the water and placed her in the stern-sheets alongside her semi-insensible mother.

Then I returned to the deck, ran below, and filled a bag with canned provisions, biscuits, and a few bottles of wine. The fire had long since caught the tar and varnish, and the whole vessel from the front of the poop forward was enveloped in flame, the sails and rigging were ablaze, I feared the masts would soon fall, and though I wanted to fill a breaker with water, I had not time to do so; in fact, in less than half a minute after I had descended to the boat and shoved off from the brig's side, the mainmast came down with a crash, sending myriads of sparks all around us.

We lay the ducking the destruction of our late home. It was a grand, an awful sight to witness, and the poor widow bowed her head and wept tears of anguish as the pretty Idalia sank slowly down beneath the seething sea—a holocaust to Neptune.

Although a nice light breeze was blowing, and we could have hoisted the mast and sail and stood in toward the land, I considered it advisable to defer doing so until morning, as we might perchance fall into the clutches of the pirates if we followed the direction they had taken. The day seemed terribly long in the evening, and before the morning star had risen a degree above the horizon, I succumbed to reaction and slipped from my seat insensible. Excitement and anxiety had sustained me up to that moment, I had not felt my wounds, I had cared for nothing but the safety of those who had been placed in my charge, but now I became weak and feeble as an infant, powerless to shake off the prostration upon me.

When I regained consciousness, the sun was high in the heavens, flinging his golden rays of splendour upon the long, gleaming, discolored tresses of the lovely girl, in whose lap my head was lying, and into the depths of whose radiant eyes I gazed.

"See, mamma! He's coming to, thank God! Give him a little more wine," murmured Ella.

The widow put a bottle to my lips, and I drank a few mouthfuls of the generous beverage—generous, for it gave me strength, but not so lavish or so potent to heal as the nectar I drank from my loved one's lips as she bowed her beautiful head and kissed my pallid brow.

"You will get well—I love you," she whispered, in soft, sweet tones, that sent a thrill of exquisite delight through every nerve and pulse in my body.

In a little while I revived sufficiently to eat a little food, and then Fred and Ella, following my directions, bent the sail and stepped the mast, and ere long our gallant little boat was bounding buoyantly over the lapis-lazuli water, cleaving the waves until iris-tinted spray flicked about her bows. The sky was clear, flicked only here and there with wisps of cirro-strata, and the great, brazen sun shed his cold rays full upon us as we reached the zenith. Soon a thin caliginous line stretching along the western horizon indicated that we were approaching land, and I headed the boat directly for it, in the hope that we might reach before nightfall one of the open ports upon the eastern coast of the Foul-Kien Province.

"Isn't that smoke, Mr. Phelps?" said Ella, later on.

"Yes, a steamer, as I live! If we can only run down far enough to attract her attention!" I replied.

I bade Fred run out on an oar, and I prepared to take another, in order to propel our little craft still faster; but Ella would not hear of my performing any manual labor, urging that I was too weak and ill; so she herself took my place, and rowed with a skill and grace which indicated her proficiency in aquatics.

"I learned to row on the dear old Hudson years ago," she explained, when I complimented her upon her dexterity.

"We went, very anxious, very silent, thinking much of the past, with its horrors—of our dead shipmates, of our savage foes—of the future and what it would bring forth—joy and security, or disappointment and danger anew. As we neared the steamer the hoisted a flag, changed her course and bore down toward us, lightening our hearts of a heavy burden, for we knew that bright eyes aboard her had discerned us—knew that we were saved!"

The steamer proved to be the Undine, of Hong Kong, bound from Amoy to Poochow, and her officers treated us with the greatest kindness and consideration during our passage to the latter port. Ella nursed me very tenderly, and in a few days I was once more quite strong and well. The Clío, an American vessel, bound to New York, was lying at the Pagoda anchorage in the river Min, and the Consul at Poochow obtained passage for the widow and her children in her. As the second-mate of the Clío wished to remain on the coast of China, I shipped in his place, in order to gratify my desire to accompany the Wests to America.

The homeward voyage was accomplished without mishap, and the few months I occupied will ever remain engraved on the tablets of my memory, for they were the sweet and blissful days of my wooing, the last of my bachelorhood, for Ella linked her life with mine for weal or woe within a week of our passing sunny Staten Island.

The Indian Bride.

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

It was on a sunny afternoon a few years ago, that a horseman was slowly riding over a western prairie, enjoying the gorgeous glory of the clouds lit up by the sinking sun, and inhaling the delicious perfume of the wild flowers each moment crushed beneath the iron hoofs of his steed, a spirited, long-limbed animal, whose form indicated both speed and brawn.

The rider was a man of perhaps twenty-eight, with a muscular, but graceful figure, fully six feet in height, and denoting great strength and activity.

The hair was light-brown, the eyes dark-blue, and the contour of the face most winning and kindly, while there also rested thereon an expression of daring and determination, which at times brought a look almost of sternness.

Dressed in a fringed buck-skin suit, jacket, bead-wrought cap, moccasins and all, and thoroughly armed with rifle, revolver, knife, and a hatchet, he was well prepared against any enemy, and as if indifferent to his danger, for he was in an Indian country, he rode carelessly along, until suddenly his horse slightly starting, caused him to glance quickly behind him, and the sight that met his gaze made him at once urge his steed forward at a rapid pace, for hardly five hundred yards in his rear came a large band of mounted warriors.

"Show them your heels, old Rover, and if they gale on you, I'll show them my rifle," said, encouragingly, to his noble horse, who, like the wind was lying over the level prairie.

Observing they were discovered, the Indians, who had been endeavoring to steal unawares upon the horseman, now came on in hot pursuit, a hundred in number, and all yelling with angry fury.

On over the flower-bespangled prairie, mile after mile, the pursued and pursuing fled, until suddenly the Indians observed the horseman go down quickly to the earth, for his horse had broken his leg to a deep hole, and falling, had broken his leg.

Instantly extricating himself from his prostrate steed, who was groaning in the anguish of his broken bones, the horseman cast one glance at his coming foes, and another across the prairie, where, miles away, could be seen the dark outlines of a forest.

"Poor, poor Rover! you are gone from me forever, and I wonder, dear old fellow, if your fate is a forerunner of mine," and the young man gazed sadly down upon his suffering animal.

"There is but one chance for me now—to keep them at bay as long as I can; but it is painful to kill him." But so speaking, and nerving himself firmly, the stranger drew a pistol, and placing it to the head of his steed, drew the trigger.

A flash, report, a few hard struggles, and the animal was dead, and the next instant was dragged by the gigantic strength of the man up to the hole into which he had trod.

A few rapid strokes of his hatchet upon the edge of the hole, a short shoveling out of the dirt, and he was well prepared against any enemy, and as if indifferent to his danger, for he was in an Indian country, he rode carelessly along, until suddenly his horse slightly starting, caused him to glance quickly behind him, and the sight that met his gaze made him at once urge his steed forward at a rapid pace, for hardly five hundred yards in his rear came a large band of mounted warriors.

Placing himself securely in his impromptu fortification, the rider leveled his rifle, and then across the prairie went his defiant war-whoop. Checked for a moment by the boldness of the white-man, the savages stopped to hold a consultation, which was quickly brought to a termination by the flash of the unerring rifle, and the fall of one of their best warriors.

Instantly they scattered, and forming in half a dozen separate bodies, they hastily rushed down upon their daring enemy, shouting and firing as they pressed on.

Again spoke the rifle, and another warrior bit the dust, while the next instant, with a revolver in each hand, the brave man poured in a rapid fire upon his foes, until each pistol was emptied; and unchecked by the fall of half a dozen of their number, they were almost upon him.

A smaller weapon was then fired rapidly with some effect, but his a wisp of defiance, and determined to die bravely, the white man, wounded and bleeding, sprang from behind his barricade with his long knife in one hand and formidable hatchet in the other, and laid about him with terrible energy.

But a huge chief grappled with him, and at the same time he was dealt a stunning blow upon the head, and sunk down upon the ground unconscious.

Returning to his senses, the white hunter found that the moon was shining brightly over the prairie, while around him were encamped his Indian captors, nearly all of whom were asleep excepting a guard and a chief who stood near.

Recognizing the chief as one whom he had known before, he called him by name. Lalaka started, and the next instant approached the captive.

"Lalaka, why have you thus treated me?"

said the hunter, speaking in the Indian dialect.

"Lalaka knew not it was his friend, the pale-face chief, until he fell, covered with wounds, and then he spared him, for the red-man has not forgotten how two snows ago you found me wounded and dying, and safely cared for me until I was well enough to go to my tribe."

"Who dressed my wounds?" asked the prisoner, who moved with considerable pain, for he had received several flesh wounds, which, though not serious, were painful.

"Lalaka did all for his white brother, and spared his life, although a dozen brave warriors went by him to the happy hunting-grounds."

"I wish there had been two dozen," muttered the hunter, but he asked aloud:

"What is to be done with me?" "Lalaka would have released you, but my warriors say no; and that you may not die, you must go to our village and become an Indian brave, if one of our women will select you for a husband."

The hunter thought a moment and murmured to himself:

"Well, this is a strange fate for me, Walter Tabor, a college graduate, an heir to great wealth, and who could have selected a wife from the first families of St. Louis, to become the husband of an Indian squaw."

"Yet I have only my wandering disposition to blame, for I had better have taken the advice of my friends and remained away from the plains, after my former experience here; but an old squaw is better than Death for a bride."

"And if I refuse, Lalaka, what is to be done with me?" said Walter Tabor, again speaking in the Indian tongue.

"Lalaka can not save his brother—he will die."

"I'll take the bride, if she's as old as sin and twice as ugly, thank you," answered the hunter; and the next morning the Indian band set forth for their village, situated two days' journey distant.

Upon the way the party were attacked by a roving band of Indians, their bitterest enemies, and having, through the kindness of Lalaka, and afterwards upon the horse of one of the warriors he had slain, Walter Tabor joined in the battle, and won the highest praise from his dusky allies, for his unerring rifle and deadly revolvers soon put the enemy to flight.

From that moment he was no longer considered a prisoner, but in triumph escorted by the savage band, who, upon arriving at camp, gave orders that he should make a selection from every fair young maiden in the village, for by marrying him off the warriors believed he would be contented to remain with them. The tribe that had captured Walter Tabor were wont to go upon yearly expeditions of marauding among the white settlers, and had thereby taken as prisoners a number of young children, whom they brought with them to their village and raised as Indians, endeavoring to make them forget their former lives.

Among these captives was a maiden of eighteen, who, in the three years she had been a prisoner, had reigned supreme as a belle, and had refused the hand of almost every dusky lover in the tribe, for she was a woman of wonderful beauty, whose eyes were as black as were those of her Indian friends, while her hair was equally as dark in hue, and longer than that of any red-skin belle in the village.

A supple, graceful form, attired in a handsome suit of buck-skin, wrought beautifully with beads, and a face, though bronzed by hot prairie suns and her wild life, yet many shades lighter than those around her, the maiden at once caught the eye of Walter Tabor, when the village belles were brought before him, and struck with admiration at her exquisite beauty of face and form, he stepped forward and said, in the Indian tongue:

"Will you be the one to share my wigwam, fair girl?"

A blood-red blush came over the lovely face, the dark eyes drooped, and then being raised showed a world of sadness therein, as she replied, in English:

"I am no Indian, but a pale-face like yourself."

One glance around upon the frowning faces of the young warriors, whose love the maiden had refused, and Walter Tabor said:

"Then you are a captive here?"

"Yes," was the low reply.

"Then again I ask you to be my bride, and as such, ere long, you will give me an opportunity to aid in your escape, when as pure as you are this day will I restore you to your friends."

The beautiful eyes filled with tears, and the tiny warm hand was placed in that of Walter Tabor, while the lips murmured:

"I will trust you."

There was great rejoicing among all in that Indian camp, excepting the disappointed rivals. And, by the Indian ceremony, Walter Tabor was made the husband of the Indian bride, and bore her in triumph to his wigwam.

A month rolled by ere an opportunity offered for the young man to lay his plans of escape without exciting the Indians' suspicion, and in that time he had gained favor by once joining them in an attack against another tribe, and rendering great service to his allies, and also having been most successful on the hunt, for he always placed before his lovely young bride the very best game the forest held.

In the quiet seclusion of their wigwam, Walter Tabor also learned the story of the maiden, how she had been stolen nearly four years before from her parents' Western home, and carried off a captive by the Indians, and since then had remained in their village unable to see any life different from the one she then led, before her capture.

One dark and stormy night, some five weeks after the arrival of Walter Tabor in the Indian village, he stole cautiously from his wigwam, followed by a closely-muffled figure, and directed his steps toward the corral where the horses were kept.

The Indian guard had sought shelter beneath a fallen tree, from the fury of the storm, and, unheeded, the young hunter selected his own splendid steed, a present from Lalaka, and another horse equally as good, and quickly saddled and bridled them.

"Now, May, let me aid you to mount," he said, in whisper; and in another minute the two steeds were rapidly dashing on, and leaving the Indian village far behind.

Daylight found the fugitives forty miles away; and then after a short rest, and food for themselves and horses, they again mounted, and at a rapid gait pressed on, for Walter Tabor well knew the country.

Over prairie and hill-land they went, until three days had gone by, and with joy they came to the settlement, then growing rapidly populous, from which, four years before, May Tabor had been carried a captive by the Indians; and, guided by the maiden, Walter halted by the gateway of a substantial and comfortable farm-house; and the next instant, in spite of the years that had gone by since they had last seen their daughter, and though they mourned her as dead, she was recognized, and warm indeed was the welcome.

The romantic story of May's escape was soon known, and there having, of course, sprung up between the young couple a most devoted love, they became engaged with the full sanction of Mr. and Mrs. Hadley; and after one year devoted by May to hard study, Walter Tabor married again his Indian bride, and left for his home in St. Louis, where all of his old friends welcomed them most cordially, and made of his wife a heroine, when her strange life as a captive became known; and never to this day has the hunter had cause to regret the desperate brush he had with red-men on the plains; and as an appreciation of the kindness of Lalaka, he sent to that worthy, when peace was made with the Indians and the whites, a number of gorgeous presents, which greatly tickled the old chief's vanity and self-importance.

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MONEYLESS JONES.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I was born (I really can not tell why)
A great deal of money I had,
And I think that the day had a very dark sky—
Or the night had a skipper moon.
Fate seems to have torn the best leaves from life's
book,
I allude to the bright-pictured ones,
And I go through the world with a very sad look,
And the name of Moneyless Jones.
I've had very good luck till I could not complain
Of any lack on that score,
I've had the measles and plenty of pain,
And the cills till I wanted no more.
I have had every kind of a chance to our town,
I often have had broken bones,
In fact I've had every thing else except cash,
Because I am Moneyless Jones.
My clothes are a great deal too ripe to be spruce,
And there isn't a pocket about them,
As I've naught to put in them they'd be of no use,
And so I can well do without them.
My name at the store will not stand for a cent,
I wish it was Smith, Yinks or Owens,
Or Hottentot Jake, for I would be content
With aught except Moneyless Jones.
I once paid attention to fair Miss McBride,
(Which was all I ever could get),
But finding this out she soon took me aside
And said, in a general way,
"My friend, I would rather live single and lone
Than to marry and live without loans,
Since you're poor I can't trust you, your credit is
gone,
So farewell, Mr. Moneyless Jones."
After this mishap if I could have bought
A few thousand pounds for a dime,
I would straightway have gone, as a torn fellow
ought,
For relief to a far-distant clime.
But I had to remain as the walking was poor,
And pour out in secret my moans,
And she wedded another in three weeks, not more,
Instead of poor Moneyless Jones.
Some are born with gold spoons in their mouths, but
I lack,
From the way in which always I grovel,
In my mouth there must have been nothing, I rock,
Unless 'twas a spade or a shovel.
I wear holes in my clothes for economy's sake,
And patches my coat's disguise,
Since I'm broken myself my seams hurry to break,
For I am poor Moneyless Jones.
I'd have plenty of money, I know that I would,
If I had only a nice farm to sell;
Or had I a bank I am established and good,
I'm sure I would get along well.
But why need I repine since I'm lacking of tin,
Dimes, dollars, dollars, doobloons?
Without money or price, I know where is an Inn—
Firmly waiting for Jones.

DICK DARLING, The Pony Express-Rider. A CALIFORNIA STORY.

BY LAUNCE POINTZ.

II.

THE Modocs were up, and all Northern California was in a fever of excitement. Volunteers were hurrying to Yreka in hot haste; the troops were being concentrated around the celebrated retreats, known as the "Lava Beds," scouts were galloping to and fro in the country, and every one was anxious and disquieted about the prospects of a general Indian war.

In the midst of all these difficulties came another, as great as any. Besides the insurrection of the Modocs, it was certain that their next neighbors, the Klamaths, were unruly and disposed to give trouble. Two mail-carriers, in succession, disappeared; and it became necessary to find a volunteer, to continue the indispensable but dangerous duty.

It was during this time of uncertainty, so well remembered by our citizens, that the good people of Yreka were surprised, one morning, to see a nattily-dressed young fellow ride through the streets to the headquarters of the commanding officer, and to hear that the renowned Dick Darling, the first man who ever rode a pony express, had offered to carry the mails to and from the Lava Beds, single-handed.

His offer was of course instantly accepted, and he departed immediately. Within an hour after, a second visitor disturbed the equanimity of the town. He came in the person of an innocent-looking negro, none other than our old friend, Tom Nelson, well mounted and armed, and followed by Dick Darling's splendid hound, Hector.

"Please, marse capten-colonel," said Tom, when he was introduced to the commander of the district, "Ise come to see ef I couldn't help de sogers, nohow. Ise ole hunter, I is, and Ise tuk many an Injun scalp, when I war down in Texas wid de ole Ninth Cavalry. You gibs me twenty dollar fur ebbery scalp, boss, an' I gets you a hull basket full."

"Get out of here, you black rascal," said the pompous commander, in great scorn. "Do you suppose that the United States can't take fifty red vagabonds without paying scalp bounties? Be off with you."

Tom drew himself up with native dignity, and cuttingly observed:

"Tain't ben looking much like takin' dem, marse colonel, when dey kills ten sogers fur one squaw. I offers my services. Will you hab dem?"

"No," thundered the commander, half angry, half amused at the darky's offer.

Tom made a stiff salute, wheeled round and marched out, muttering:

"Nedat be so huffy, noway; don't want to steal nuffin."

He climbed into his saddle, and rode out of the town in high dudgeon, resolved, as he expressed it, "to have a scout on his own hook, anyway."

It took but a short time for him to be clear of the town; and then, when shut out by an intervening swell, he seemed to be as much alone as if in the midst of the desert.

Tom Nelson had not obtained horse and arms, had not come all this way from Fairfield's ranch, without an object. What that object was, will be explained by a few words that fell from the lips of Charlotte Fairfield, the day before, when Dick Darling rode away to Yreka from the ranch, announcing his intention of volunteering as mail-carrier.

"Tom," she said to the negro, "there is something tells me that Dick is going to a greater peril than he has ever yet run. Are you brave?"

"Try me, missy," was the laconic reply. "Take my horse, and one of my father's rifles, then," she said, "and follow Dick. Whatever happens to him, do you be near him; and let no harm come to him. Bring him back safe, Tom, and I'll give you free quarters in our house for life."

And Charlotte blushed, for it was currently reported that she and Dick were to be married, as soon as the latter had settled his "claim."

Tom accepted the offer with eagerness. Mounted and armed, he was a very different man from Tom on a slow mule, without a weapon. Followed by the hound Hector, which he trusted implicitly, while Darling considered the dog an incumbrance in active service, he set forth, and presented himself at Yreka, as we have seen. The fact was that Tom, while anxious to serve his patroness, was equally anxious to turn an honest penny; and he had heard from all the citizens round that a bounty was offered on Modoc scalps. His reception by

Col. W.—had undeceived him, and he resolved "to stick to business, and bring back Marse Dick."

For some time Tom rode north from Yreka toward the Lava Beds in a very leisurely manner, making frequent excursions to the right and left, and hunting for Darling's trail. On the hard ground of the prairie he might never have found it, had it not been for the assistance of the hound. Hector suddenly uttered a low yelp of joy, and set off at a swinging gallop, with his nose to the ground, following the trail which his keen scent recognized as that of his master.

"Good hound, good ole Hee!" cried Tom, delighted. "Who says dat we can't track like all creation?"

And away galloped the darky after the dog, at a round rate of speed, the track of horses' feet appearing at intervals, the sagacious dog running steadily along, the scent "lying well," to use a phrase culled from the language of the prairie.

After nearly an hour of this sort of work, Hector made a dead stop; and appeared puzzled.

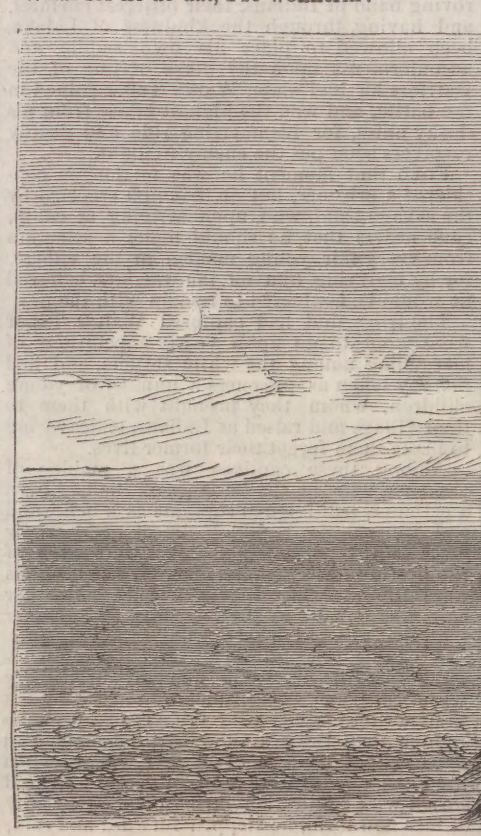
Then he ran slowly and hesitatingly along for some paces, and at last paused, threw up his head, and gave utterance to a long and mournful howl.

"Gorra mighty, wurra dat!" exclaimed Tom, as he looked down to find the cause of the dog's behavior.

To his surprise, appeared nothing singular. The hoof tracks had vanished, or were so faint as to be scarcely discernible; yet it was evident that the hound could not have lost the scent. In fact, he had not. As if he had relieved his feelings by that howl, he set off on the track once more, and speedily put another mile between himself and Yreka.

Tom noticed, however, that he ran slowly and seemed uneasy. Every now and then he would half stop, turn his head to windward, and utter a low wail, till at last, as a puff of wind came from the north-east, Hector again stopped, threw up his head, and howled once more.

"Dat dog's got mo' sense dan half de Christians," soliloquized Tom, scratching his head. "Whaf for he do dat, Ise wonderin'!"



Then, as a sudden idea struck him, he cried: "Why, Tom Nelson, ef you isn't a foolin' nigger! You so anxious to catch Marse Dick you forget whar you is. Dem's Injuns, and de dog smell 'um. He nebbet ar dat way widout dey was around."

The negro halted and cogitated. Then, taking a sudden resolution, he called the dog off the track, and spoke to him.

"Find de Injuns, good Hee, find dem; and we'se spoil deir leetle game. Dey's arter Marse Dick, jess so sho' as eggs is eggs."

The hound, with wonderful sagacity, appeared to understand the reason of the change of route; for he galloped off to windward, his head well up, no longer whining or baying, but "running mute." It was plain from his actions that the Indians could not be far off. Tom brought his rifle to the front in readiness and followed at a canter. As he topped the next swell, he came in sight of a scene that repaid him for his change of course. He had, indeed, arrived in the nick of time.

Not a mile off the rugged edges of the famous lava beds could be seen indenting the edge of the prairie, giving but little indication of the deep chasms and caves that existed below the surface.

Tom stood by the brink of a long, narrow valley; and up it was coming, slowly riding back from the lava beds, Dick Darling himself returning with the led mail-pony. But not fifty feet from the negro crouched a group of five Modocs behind a rock, waiting for the unsuspecting mail-carrier. Well was it for Dick that that presentiment of danger had crossed Charlotte's mind, and induced her to dispatch Tom on his track. In a moment the darky justified his patroness' choice. Up went his Spencer rifle to his shoulder before a Modoc had risen; and the biggest warrior fell dead.

Then there was a confused hurly-burly of shots, ending by fearless Dick coming galloping up, a revolver in each hand; and the result was summed up in the death of three Modocs, the wounding of Tom in several places, none of them deep, and the flight of the remaining pair of assassins among the cracks and fissures toward the Lava Beds, while the negro and Darling galloped safely back to camp.

Before they went, Tom religiously scalped each one of his fallen foes, and then turning to Darling, the blood streaming from his wounds, observed:

"Marse Dick, you isn't fit to take care of yourself. You jess better done gone git married. Missy Charlotte she send me to take care of you, and by golly you needs it, for ef it hadn't been for me you'se done gone to hebbin dis day."

(To be continued.)

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Strange Stories.

THE FELON PIG.
AN ENGLISH LEGEND.

BY AGILE PENNE.

WHERE the cold, gray stone walls of Richmond Convent frowned on the lily lea, hard by was the lands of Sir Ralph, lord of Rokeby.

Learned and pious were the gray brothers of Richmond; bold and scornful and church-defying was Sir Ralph of Rokeby. Little good will bore he to the barefooted friars, and loudly he cried that they were but a set of arrant knaves.

Many a prayer was said in the abbey old that heaven might soften the heart of the warlike knight.

Then came the holy Christmas time, and the almoner of the convent, with his servitors, sought for help for the poor of Richmond from all the noble gentlemen in the West Riding of Yorkshire. To Lord Rokeby, too, he went, although the bitter word and scornful look were all he expected from the knight, who made a jest of church and creed.

But the dark warrior laughed in wicked glee as he gazed into the face of the aged friar, and quickly bestowed a gift upon them.

"In my woods of Rokeby there runs a felon pig; his color is as dark as the bark of the oak, and his tusks as long as the dagger at my side. No knave in my train dares to turn the rugged pig from his way. This precious gift will I bestow upon thy convent, good father, if thee and thine can capture the ruthless pig."

Back to their convent went the monks, and to the Prior the aged brother related how the impious lord had given the felon pig to Richmond Abbey.

The Prior heaved a heavy sigh, and told the barefooted monks that they must pray often and long for the soul of Sir Ralph of Rokeby, that he might be able at last to see the wickedness of his ways.

"And since this loud and scornful scoffer has given to us the felon pig, go forth, brethren,

So the banner of Rokeby waved not in the breeze of Ascalon, nor beneath the towers when Salem was won from the Paynim host.

"Twas a day of wassail and of cheer, for, forty years before, stern Sir Ralph had come, a squalling infant, into this vale of tears.

Ladye bright and gallant knight had gathered that morning fair in the dark towers of Rokeby castle; and then, when the morning cheer was over, all the gallant train had ridden forth to chase the wild pig amid the oaks of Rokeby forest.

Across the path of stern Sir Ralph there started a grisly pig, and with a single thrust of his stout arm, the knight drove the boar-spear home to the heart of the beast.

"Twas the felon pig that the knight had slain, but he knew it not, so great the brute had grown. Home to Rokeby castle he dispatched the prize and orders gave that for supper the pig should be roasted.

On a spit within the ample kitchen hung the carcass of the pig when the evening drew nigh, and a stout monk, clad in a garb of gray, claimed hospitality for an hour or more. It was the almoner of the abbey, good father Clement.

At first the knaves denied him, for they feared their master's rage if they gave shelter, food and drink to a friar of orders gray. But fear of the church's power, and doubts as to what the consequences might be if they denied a humble servant of the cross food and fire, they at last secured the monk admittance, but they bade him eat and drink his fill, then haste away, for evil would come both to him and them, if stern Sir Ralph, returning, should find him there.

The monk he ate and he drank, for he had traveled many a league since the matin hour; then, as he rose to depart, he saw the pig roasting before the fire, and the knaves told him how the pig had been slain that morn in the wood near by.

The friar he looked and he stared, for the felon pig he recognized; the pig that to him and his fellows of right belonged. Then he bided his time, and when the knaves from the kitchen were clear, he drew the knife from his girdle and quickly cut off the head of the felon pig and hid it away in his leathern poke.

Rod and Rifle.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THE WILDERNESS."

VII.—THE PHANTOM DEER-HUNTERS.

OLD BEN proposed a fire hunt for the next night. "Barkis was willin'!"

We were provided with the old-fashioned "Jack" for night hunting—simply a pan of light-wood and a shield of bark, which, when the pan was blazing, left the occupants of the canoe in the shadow, while the light, gleaming on the eyes of the deer, showed us where to aim. We were not scientific fishermen or hunters, if we except the guides and Viator, who had spent so much of his summer life in the woods, that it was difficult to find a man, even among the guides, who could surpass him in woodcraft. We can not not be mighty hunters, and perhaps it is just as well that this is so. On the contrary, we claimed to be amateurs, and I much doubt me whether one of us would have attacked a deer even when driven into the water and swimming for his life. It is not every man who can plant his bullet between the eyes of a deer at a hundred yards, by the light of a "jack."

We glided on under the silent stroke of the paddles in the hands of the guides. These two, trained to the use of the paddle from boyhood, are simply perfect. The stout ash blades rises and falls as lightly as the wing of a duck, scarcely disturbing the limpid element through which it passes. There is no noise along the lake, if we except the loon call and the usual noises of the woods, which, after all, seem a part of the vast solitude. No noise in the boats, each man sits with ready weapon lying on his knees, waiting to see the twin sparks, which are the eyes of the deer gleaming in the light of the "jack." I am ashamed to say, unpolitic as it may seem, that I had armed myself with the old-fashioned deer-gun which Dan had used in the squirrel-hunt, because I felt more certain with four or five buckshot in the barrel than I would have done with a single ball. Old Ben did not expect us to be Nimrods, as most of these scientific guides do.

"Steady!" the word came back from Ben's boat to us, and the boy rested on his paddle, and we looked out ahead.

"Now, cuss my boots," whispered Old Ben, "of thar ain't a man ahead of us. Only look at thar."

Ahead of us, and distant perhaps half a mile, a jack-fire gleamed upon the water, gliding slowly down toward us in the gloom of the silent night. Old Ben was very wroth, for he had reason to believe we had the lake all to ourselves, and to find a boat ahead of us on the hunting-grounds, was a reflection upon him as a guide. He looked at it with a puzzled air, and as we gazed, the light suddenly disappeared.

"They've headed in to the shore," said Old Ben. "Hold on a minnit an' you'll hear the crack of the rifle."

But we waited in vain for the report. Not a sound was heard, and the light did not appear, and Old Ben turned to us with a face which looked ghastly under the light of our jack.

"See hyar, boys," he whispered, "I don't want to skeer ye, but thet's the Phantom Hunters."

"Oh, pshaw, Ben," said Harry, laughing. "Remember that we are men of sense."

"All right," replied Ben, with sudden anger. "I'm a liar, then; thar ain't no sech things as the Phantom Hunters."

"Yes, thar is," said his son. "The old man is right, gentlemen, and I reckon we'd better give up the hunt, for when the phantoms are on the lake, nobody else won't get any game."

"I'll chance it," said Viator, lightly. "There! Look out to your right and you'll see your phantom, Ben. Paddle on."

About three hundred yards to the right, and moving on with a steady, waveless motion, which, somehow, affected us all unpleasantly, appeared the gleaming light we had first seen.

"There's no such thing as 'Phantom Hunters,' said Dan, dogmatically. "We don't allow such things in private, though we make the most of them in the daily press."

"I don't 'low no greenhorns from the towns to cum out hyar an' tell me things ain't so when I know they be," replied old Ben. "Now look hyar; I'll prove that this ain't no common hunting party." Put out the fires and head for the light, Ben."

Our fire was hissing in the water before the words had fairly left his lips, and under the swift but silent stroke of the paddles, the light boats swung round and headed for the light which had ceased to move ahead, and was now moving about in a circle directly in front. We came on with flying speed, the boats fairly leaping at every stroke of the paddle, until the light was scarcely a hundred feet away.

"I told you so," cried Harry. "I can see the canoe, and there are two men in it. Hello, there!"

As the sound of his voice broke the silence, the light went out like lightning, and the next moment the boats passed over the very spot where the canoe had rested a moment before.

But where was it now? It was impossible for any paddler, no matter how active, to get away from the spot so far that we could not see at least the outlines of the canoe, for we were close upon them when the light went out. There was a strange hush in the two boats, and we heard close at hand a hollow gurgling laugh—such a laugh as I have never heard before or since, and which I hope never to hear again. Then, as if by magic, the light flamed out across the water many rods in the rear.

"This is trickery," hissed Viator, who, like other men of sound sense, found it hard to believe his own eyes in a case like this. "After them again, Ben!"

"You ain't satisfied yit, boys," said the old guide; "and I don't know ez I blame ye, either. The first time I see thet cussid light, I chased it three mortal hours, but ye mout ez well chase the wind. Why sh'd we, poor mortal men, foller a spirit which is doomed to haunt this lake and lead hunters astray? Let's give it up."

"Never!" cried Harry. "Here, I'll take the paddle with you. It can't get away from us both."

Harry took up the second paddle, and in grim silence Old Ben swung the boat round, and we headed again toward the light, flashing out ahead. Creeping up as we had done before, until the light was just under our bows, we could see the canoe dimly outlined upon the water. In it sat two shadowy figures, one with a rifle across his knees, while the other held the ready paddle. In the bow gleamed that strange, vivid, phosphorescent light which had puzzled us so long, and without a sound of warning our paddles were thrust into the water, and the boats leaped forward like liberated bloodhounds. But when the bow of Ben's boat seemed about to cut the stranger in twain, the light went out with a flash, and again that hollow, terrible laugh disturbed the silence of the night, and we saw the light no more.

Without a word of objection from us, the guides headed their light boats toward the camp, and left the hunting-grounds behind. They were not the men, in the face of such warnings, to tempt Providence by remaining on the lake.